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THE GOOD OLD TIMES BY W. H. AINSWORTH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE

GOOD OLD TIMES:

THE STORY

OF THE MANCHESTER REBELS OF '45.

BY

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "BOSCOBEL," ETC. ETC.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

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CONTENTS

OF VOLUME II.

BOOK II.—*continued.*

PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD IN MANCHESTER.

		Page
XXIV.	The Prince inspects the Manchester Regiment	9
XXV.	An unsatisfactory Explanation	12
XXVI.	The Ride to Rawcliffe Hall	17
XXVII.	Rawcliffe Hall	20
XXVIII.	A startling Disclosure	26
XXIX.	The mysterious Chamber	30
XXX.	A terrible Catastrophe	34
XXXI.	Sir Richard Rawcliffe's Confession	41
XXXII.	Atherton's Decision is made	51

BOOK III.

THE MARCH TO DERBY, AND THE RETREAT.

I.	An Old Jacobite Dame	59
II.	Atherton's Gift to Constance	65
III.	A Retreat resolved upon	72
IV.	How the Manchester Regiment was welcomed on its Return	79
V.	A Fresh Subsidy demanded	84
VI.	A False Message brought to Helen	88
VII.	A Court-Martial	97
VIII.	Helen Pleads in Vain	104
IX.	Together to the Last	109
X.	Mr. James Bayley	116

Page

XI. The Vision 120
XII. The Retreat from Manchester to Carlisle 127

BOOK IV.

CARLISLE.

I. Colonel Townley appointed Commandant of the Carlisle Garrison 133
II. Atherton taken Prisoner 136
III. The Duke of Cumberland 143
IV. Surrender of Carlisle to the Duke of Cumberland . . 147

BOOK V.

JEMMY DAWSON.

I. The Escape at Wigan 157
II. The Meeting at Warrington 163
III. Atherton takes Refuge at Rawcliffe Hall 168
IV. An Enemy in the House 175
V. A Point of Faith 181
VI. A Letter from Beppy Byrom 187
VII. Atherton questions the Priest. 194
VIII. The Search 199
IX. Who was Found in the dismantled Rooms 204
X. A successful Stratagem 208
XI. Atherton meets with Dr. Deacon at Rosthern . . . 216
XII. A sad Communication is made to Dr. Deacon . . . 225
XIII. A Journey to London proposed 230
XIV. Jemmy Dawson's Letter 234
XV. The Parting between Monica and her Mother . . . 244
XVI. The Journey 250

BOOK VI.

KENNINGTON COMMON.

I. Monica visits Jemmy in Newgate 257
II. Colonel Conway 262
III. Cumberland House 267
IV. The Trial of the Manchester Rebels 277
V. The Night before the Executions 285
VI. The Fatal Day 288
VII. Five Years later 298

THE GOOD OLD TIMES.

BOOK II.

PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD IN MANCHESTER.

(CONTINUED.)

XXIV.

The Prince inspects the Manchester Regiment.

On coming forth from the church, Charles and his attendants found the newly-formed Manchester Regiment drawn up in the churchyard.

The corps numbered about three hundred men; most of them being fine stalwart young fellows, averaging six feet in height. Till that morning none of them had donned their uniforms, or even shouldered a musket, but by the exertions of Colonel Townley, the Chevalier de Johnstone, and Sergeant Dickson, they had been got into something like order, and now presented a very creditable appearance.

The officers looked exceedingly well in their handsome uniforms—red faced with blue. On this occasion each wore a plaid waistcoat with laced loops, a plaid sash lined with white silk, and had a white cockade in his hat. In addition to the broadsword by his side, each officer had a brace of pistols attached to his girdle.

Though all, from the colonel downwards, were

fine, handsome men, unquestionably the handsomest young man in the corps was Captain Legh.

The flag of the regiment was borne by Ensign Syddall. On one side was the mottó—LIBERTY AND PROPERTY; on the other—CHURCH AND COUNTRY.

The standard-bearer looked proud of his office. Nothing now of the barber about Ensign Syddall. So changed was his aspect, so upright his thin figure, that he could scarcely be recognised. To look at him, no one would believe that he could ever smile. He seemed to have grown two or three inches taller. His deportment might be somewhat too stiff, but he had a true military air; and his acquaintances, of whom there were many in the crowd, regarded him with wonder and admiration.

The ensign, however, took no notice of any familiar observations addressed to him, having become suddenly haughty and distant.

With the regiment were four field-pieces.

Their chargers having been brought round, Charles and his suite rode slowly past the front of the line—the prince halting occasionally to make a commendatory remark to the men, who responded to these gratifying observations by enthusiastic shouts.

"I am glad the flag of the regiment has been intrusted to you, Syddall," said Charles to the new

ensign. "No one, I am sure, could take better care of it."

"I will defend it with my life," replied Syddall, earnestly.

This hasty inspection finished, Charles quitted the churchyard with his suite, and rode back to his head-quarters.

The Manchester Regiment soon followed. Elated by the commendations of the prince, which they flattered themselves were merited, the men marched through the market-place, and past the Exchange to St. Ann's-square, in tolerably good order, and in high good humour, which was not diminished by the cheers of the spectators. Colonel Townley then gave them some necessary orders, after which they dispersed, and repaired to their various quarters.

XXV.

An unsatisfactory Explanation.

HAVING partaken of a slight repast, the prince again mounted his charger and rode out of the town in a different direction from any he had previously taken, being desirous to see the country.

He was only attended by Colonel Ker and the Chevalier de Johnstone, having dismissed his guard of honour.

At that time the environs of Manchester were exceedingly pretty, and the prospects spread out before him had a wild character of which little can now be discerned. Smedley Hall formed the limit of his ride, and having gazed at this picturesque old structure, which was situated in a valley, with a clear stream flowing past it, and a range of bleak-looking hills in the distance, he turned off on the left, and made his way through a heathy and uncultivated district to Kersal Moor.

From these uplands he obtained a charming view of the valley of the Irwell, bounded by the collegiate church, and the old buildings around it, and after contemplating the prospect for a short

time, he descended from the heights and returned to the town.

Not being expected at the time, he passed very quietly through the streets, and reached his head-quarters without hindrance, having greatly enjoyed his ride.

Immediately after his return a levée was held, which being more numerously attended than that on the preceding day, occupied nearly two hours.

After this he had a conference with the magistrates in the audience-chamber, and he then repaired to his private cabinet, where he expected to find Sir Richard Rawcliffe and the others, whose attendance he had commanded.

Constance was there and Atherton, but in place of the baronet appeared Father Jerome. Repressing his displeasure, Charles graciously saluted the party, and then addressing Constance said:

"Why is not Sir Richard here, Miss Rawcliffe?"

"Father Jerome will explain the cause of his absence," she replied. "I had no conversation with him before his departure."

"Then he is gone!" cried Charles, frowning. "I trust your explanation of his strange conduct may prove satisfactory," he added to the priest.

"The step I own appears strange," replied Father Jerome, in a deprecatory tone; "but I trust it may

be excused. Sir Richard has gone to Rawcliffe Hall to procure certain documents which he desires to lay before your royal highness."

"But why did he not ask my permission before setting out?" observed Charles, sternly.

"Unquestionably, that would have been the proper course," rejoined the priest. "But I presume he hoped to be back in time."

"He could not have thought so," cried Charles, sharply. "The distance is too great. He shrinks from the interrogations which he knows would be addressed to him. But I will not be trifled with. I will learn the truth. If he does not come I will send a guard for him. I will not detain you longer now, Miss Rawcliffe," he added to Constance. "Possibly, I may require your attendance again, and yours, also, father."

On this intimation Constance made a profound obeisance, and retired with the priest.

As soon as they were gone, the prince's countenance assumed a very singular expression, and he said to Atherton:

"What think you of all this?"

"My opinion is that Sir Richard Rawcliffe does not mean to return, and has sent Father Jerome to make these excuses for him," replied Atherton.

"I have come to the same conclusion," replied

Charles. "He has set my authority at defiance, but he shall find that I can reach him. You must set out at once for Rawcliffe Hall, and bring him hither."

"I am ready to obey your highness's orders," replied Atherton. "I have never seen Sir Richard's residence; but I know it is situated near Warrington, about eighteen miles from Manchester. I can get there in a couple of hours—perhaps in less."

"Provided you bring back the unruly baronet before night I shall be satisfied," said Charles.

He then sat down at the table, on which writing materials were placed, wrote a few lines on a sheet of paper, and, after attaching the sign-manual to the order, gave it to Atherton.

"Sir Richard will not dare to resist that mandate," he said. "I do not think a guard will be necessary. But you shall take Sergeant Dickson with you. You will find him with the Chevalier de Johnstone at Lord George Murray's quarters. Show this order to Colonel Johnstone, and he will provide you with a good horse, and give all necessary directions to the sergeant. He will also explain the cause of your absence to Colonel Townley. Understand that you are to bring back Sir Richard with you at all hazards."

"I will not fail," replied Atherton.

Bowing deeply, he then quitted the prince's presence, and proceeded at once to Lord George Murray's quarters in Deansgate, where he found the Chevalier de Johnstone and Sergeant Dickson.

The Chevalier de Johnstone understood the matter at once, and immediately ordered the sergeant to provide two strong horses for Captain Legh and himself, bidding him go well armed.

Although the sergeant was told by his colonel to lose no time, he easily prevailed upon Atherton to let him bid adieu to Helen, who, as the reader is aware, had found a lodging with Beppy Byrom.

Very little delay, however, occurred, for as the sergeant rode up to the doctor's dwelling, Helen, who seemed to be on the watch, rushed out to greet him, and learnt his errand, receiving a kiss at the same time.

XXVI.

The Ride to Rawcliffe Hall.

Crossing the bridge, and passing through Salford, Atherton and his attendant proceeded at a rapid pace towards the pretty little village of Pendleton. Skirting the wide green, in the midst of which stood the renowned May-pole, they hastened on through a pleasant country to Eccles—proceeding thence, without drawing bridle, to Barton-on-Irwell.

The road they were now pursuing formed a sort of causeway, bounded on the left by the deeply-flowing river, and on the right by the dark and dreary waste which could be seen stretching out for miles, almost as far as the town towards which they were speeding. This dangerous morass was then wholly impassable, except by those familiar with it; and, as Atherton's eye wandered over its treacherous surface, he pointed out to his attendant a distant spot on the extreme verge of the marsh, observing, with a singular smile:

"Yonder is Warrington."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Dickson. "Then we might

shorten our distance materially by crossing the morass."

"No doubt, if we *could* cross it," rejoined Atherton. "But we should be swallowed up, horse and man, before we had proceeded far. Many an incautious traveller has met his death in Chat Moss."

"It looks an unchancy place, I must say," observed the sergeant, shuddering, as he gazed at it.

Beyond Boysnape the causeway narrowed, bringing them in dangerous proximity both with the river and the morass; but they rode on past Irlam, until they reached the point of junction between the Irwell and the Mersey—the last-named river dividing Cheshire from Lancashire. They had now ridden full ten miles; but, as their steeds showed no signs of fatigue, they went without slackening their pace to Glazebrook and Rixton. Chat Moss had been left behind, and for the last two miles they had been passing through a well-wooded district, and had now reached another dangerous morass, called Risley Moss, which compelled them to keep close to the Mersey. Little, however, could be seen of the river, its banks being thickly fringed with willows and other trees. Passing Martinscroft and Woolston, they held on till they came within half a mile of Warrington, even then a considerable town. Though the bridge at Warrington

had been destroyed, a ford was pointed out to them, and they were soon on the other side of the Mersey, and in Cheshire.

From inquiries which they now made at a small roadside inn where they halted for a few minutes to refresh themselves and their horses, they ascertained they were within a mile of Rawcliffe Park, and after a short colloquy with the host, who was very curious to learn what was doing at Manchester, and who told them he had seen Sir Richard Rawcliffe ride past some three or four hours ago, they resumed their journey, and soon arrived at the gates of the park.

XXVII.

Rawcliffe Hall.

THE domain was extensive, but had a neglected appearance, and did not possess any old timber, all the well-grown trees having been cut down in the time of the former proprietor, Sir Oswald Rawcliffe. Neither was the park picturesque, being flat, and in some places marshy. On one side it was bounded by the Mersey, and its melancholy look impressed Atherton as he gazed around.

Still he felt a singular interest in the place for which he could not account, unless it were that Constance was connected with it.

At length, they came in sight of the old mansion, near which grew some of the finest trees they had yet seen. The house had a gloomy look that harmonised with the melancholy appearance of the park.

Atherton had never beheld the place before, yet he seemed somehow familiar with it. The wide moat by which it was surrounded, the drawbridge, the gate-tower, the numerous gables, the bay-win-

dows, all seemed like an imperfectly recollected picture.

So struck was he with the notion that he drew in the rein for a few minutes, and gazed steadfastly at the antique mansion, endeavouring to recal the circumstances under which he could have beheld it, but it vanished like a dream.

Before riding up to the house, he held a brief consultation with the sergeant, as to how it would be best to proceed.

Hitherto, they had seen no one in the park, which, as already stated, had a thoroughly neglected air; nor, as far as they could judge, had their approach been remarked by any of the inmates of the house.

Gloom seemed to brood over the place. So silent was it that it might have been uninhabited.

"If I had not been assured that Sir Richard is at home, I should not have thought so," remarked Atherton. "The house has not a very cheerful or hospitable air."

"Luckily, the drawbridge is down, or we might have been kept on the wrong side of the moat," remarked the sergeant. "My advice is that we enter the fort before we are discovered, or we may never get in at all."

Acting upon the counsel, Atherton put spurs to

his horse, and rode up to the house, which did not look a whit more cheerful as he approached it, and without halting to ring the bell, dashed across the drawbridge, passed through the open gateway and entered the court-yard, which to the young man's great surprise did not look so neglected as the exterior of the mansion had led him to anticipate.

The noise they made on entering the court-yard seemed to have roused the inmates from the sleep into which they had apparently been plunged. An old butler, followed by a couple of footmen, came out of the house, and with evident alarm depicted in his countenance, requested to know their business.

"Our business is with Sir Richard Rawcliffe," replied Atherton. "We must see him immediately."

"I do not think Sir Richard will see you, gentlemen," replied the butler. "He is much fatigued. I will deliver any message to him with which you may charge me."

"We must see him," cried the sergeant, authoritatively. "We come from the prince."

The butler no longer hesitated, but assuming a deferential air, said he would at once conduct the gentlemen to his master.

As they had already dismounted, he bade one of the servants take their horses to the stable, and

ushered the unwelcome visitors into a large entrance-hall, in which a wood fire was burning.

Remarking that the butler stared at him very hard, Atherton said:

"You look at me as if you had seen me before. Is it so? I have no recollection of you."

"I don't think I have seen you before, sir," replied the man, gravely. "But I have seen some one very like you. Whom shall I announce to Sir Richard?"

"I am Captain Legh," said Atherton. "But there is no necessity to announce me. Conduct me to your master at once."

The butler, though evidently uneasy, did not venture to disobey, but led him to a room that opened out of the hall. The sergeant followed close behind Atherton.

They had been ushered into the library. Sir Richard was writing at a table, but raising his eyes on their entrance, he started up, and exclaimed in an angry voice:

"Why have you brought these persons here, Markland? I told you I would not be disturbed."

"Your servant is not to blame, Sir Richard," interposed Atherton. "I insisted upon seeing you. I am sent to bring you to the prince."

"It is my intention to return to Manchester to-

night," replied the baronet, haughtily. "But I have some affairs to arrange."

"I shall be sorry to inconvenience you, Sir Richard," observed Atherton. "But my orders are precise. You must present yourself at the prince's head-quarters before midnight."

"I engage to do so," replied the baronet.

"But you must be content to accompany me, Sir Richard. Such are my orders from his royal highness."

"And mine," added Sergeant Dickson.

Controlling his anger by a powerful effort, Sir Richard said with forced calmness:

"Since such are the prince's orders I shall not dispute them. I will return with you to Manchester. We will set out in two hours' time. In the interim I shall be able to arrange some papers which I came for, and which I desire to take with me. By that time you will have rested, and your horses will be ready for the journey."

Then turning to Markland, he added:

"Conduct Captain Legh and Sergeant Dickson to the dining-room, and set some refreshment before them without delay."

"Take me to the servants' hall, Mr. Markland," said Dickson. "I cannot sit down with my officer."

Just as Atherton was about to leave the room,

Sir Richard stepped up to him and said in a low tone:

"Before we start, I should like to have a little conversation with you in private, Captain Legh."

"I am quite at your service now, Sir Richard," replied the young man.

He then glanced significantly at Dickson, who went out with the butler, leaving him alone with the baronet.

XXVIII.

A Startling Disclosure.

When the door was closed, Sir Richard's manner somewhat changed towards the young man, and with less haughtiness than he had hitherto manifested, he said to him:

"Pray be seated. I have much to say to you."

Atherton complied, but for some minutes Sir Richard continued to pace rapidly to and fro within the room, as if unwilling to commence the conversation he had proposed.

At last, he seated himself opposite the young man, who had watched him with surprise.

"Are you acquainted with the history of my family?" he inquired, looking steadfastly at his auditor.

"I have some slight acquaintance with it," replied Atherton.

"You are aware, I presume, that the Rawcliffes have occupied this old mansion for upwards of two centuries?"

Atherton bowed, but made no remark. Sir Richard went on:

"My ancestors have all been high and honourable men, and have handed a proud name from one generation to another. Would it not be grievous if a stain were affixed on a name, hitherto unsullied, like ours? Yet if this inquiry which the prince has instituted be pursued, such must infallibly be the case. A dark secret connected with our family may be brought to light. Now listen to me, and you shall judge:

"Some twenty years ago Sir Oswald Rawcliffe, my elder brother, died, leaving a widow and an infant son. Lady Rawcliffe came to reside here with her child—do you note what I say?"

"I think I have heard that the child was stolen, under mysterious circumstances," said Atherton, "and that the lady subsequently died of grief."

"You have heard the truth," said Sir Richard, with a strange look. "As the child could not be found, I succeeded to the title and the estates."

A pause ensued, during which such fearful suspicions crossed Atherton that he averted his gaze from the baronet.

Suddenly, Sir Richard rose in his chair, leaned forward, and gazing fixedly at Atherton, exclaimed:

"What will you say if I tell you that the child who was carried off, and supposed to be dead, is still living? What will you say if I tell you that you

are Conway Rawcliffe, the son of Sir Oswald, and rightful heir to the property?"

"Amazement!" cried the listener.

"For many years I have deprived you of your inheritance and your title—have appropriated your estates, and have dwelt in your house. But I have been haunted by remorse, and have known no happiness. Sleep has been scared from my eyelids by the pale lady who died of grief in this very house, and I have known no rest. But I shall sleep soundly soon," he added, with terrible significance. "I will make reparation for the wrongs I have done. I will restore all I have taken from you—house, lands, name, title."

Again there was a pause. The young man was struck dumb by astonishment, and it was Sir Richard who broke silence.

"What think you I was engaged on when you entered this room? I will tell you. I was writing out a full confession of the crime I have committed in the hope of atoning for my guilt. Already I have narrated part of the dark story. I have told how you were carried off and whither you were conveyed; but I have yet to relate how you were brought up in Manchester in complete ignorance of the secret of your birth, and how I acted as your guardian. Full details shall be given so that your

identity can easily be established. When my confession is finished, I will deliver it to you, and you can show it to the prince."

"However you may have acted previously, you are acting well now," remarked Atherton. "But I will no longer interrupt you in your task."

"Stay!" cried the baronet. "I will show you a room which I myself have not seen for years. I have not dared to enter it, but I can enter it now. Follow me!"

XXIX.

The mysterious Chamber.

Opening a movable shelf in the bookcase, he disclosed a narrow passage, along which they proceeded till they came to a small back staircase, evidently communicating by a small outlet with the moat.

Mounting this staircase, Sir Richard unfastened a door, which admitted them to a dark corridor. From its appearance it was evident that this part of the mansion was shut up.

A stifling sensation, caused by the close, oppressive atmosphere, affected Atherton, and vague terrors assailed him. Two doors faced them. Sir Richard opened one of the doors, and led his companion into an antechamber, the furniture of which was mouldering and covered with dust.

A door communicating with an inner room stood ajar. After a moment's hesitation Sir Richard passed through it, and was followed by Atherton.

The chamber was buried in gloom, but on a window-shutter being opened a strange scene was disclosed. At the further end of the apartment stood an old bedstead, which seemed fully prepared

for some occupant, though it could not have been slept in for many years. Quilt and pillow were mildewed and mouldering, and the sheets yellow with age. The hangings were covered with dust. Altogether, the room had a ghostly look.

For some moments Atherton could not remove his gaze from that old bed, which seemed to exercise a sort of fascination, but when he looked at Sir Richard, he was appalled by the terrible change that had come over him.

He looked the picture of horror and despair. His pallid countenance was writhen with anguish, and his limbs shook. A deep groan burst from his labouring breast.

"The hour is near at hand," he muttered, in tones scarcely human. "But I am not yet ready. Spare me till my task is finished!"

With a ghastly look he then added to Atherton: "The whole scene rises before me as it occurred on that dreadful night. The room is hushed and quiet, and within that bed a child is peacefully slumbering on his mother's breast. A masked intruder comes in—admitted by the nurse, who has betrayed her mistress. Unmoved by a picture of innocence that might have touched any heart less savage than his own, he snatches up the child, and is bearing it off when the mother awakes. Her piercing shriek

still rings through my ears. I cannot describe what follows—but 'tis soon over—and when the worse than robber departs with his prize, he leaves the wretched mother lying senseless on the floor, and the nurse dead—slain by his ruthless hand!"

"Horror!" exclaimed Atherton, unable to control his feelings.

"Let us hence, or I shall become mad," cried Sir Richard, hurrying him away.

So bewildered was Atherton, that he could scarcely tell how he regained the library, but when he got there, he sank into a chair, and covered his eyes with his hands, as if to exclude the terrible vision by which he had been beset.

On rousing himself from the stupor into which he had fallen, he perceived Sir Richard seated at the table, writing his confession, and feeling that his presence might disturb him he rose to depart.

Sir Richard rose likewise, and while conducting him to the door, said:

"I will send for you when I have done. I shall be best alone for a short time. But let me give you a word of counsel, and do not distrust it because it comes from me. 'Tis my wish, as you know, to repair the wrong I have done. I would not have you forfeit the lofty position you have just obtained."

"I hope I shall not forfeit it," said Atherton, proudly.

"You will not long hold it," rejoined Sir Richard, in a solemn tone, "unless you withdraw from this ill-fated expedition. It will end in your destruction. Attend to my warning!"

"I cannot honourably retreat," said Atherton.

"You must," cried Sir Richard, sternly. "Why throw away your life from a fancied sense of honour, when such fair prospects are opening upon you? 'Twill be madness to persist."

Atherton made no reply, and Sir Richard said no more.

But as he opened the door he gave the young man a look so full of strange significance that he almost guessed its import.

Sir Richard paused for a moment as he went back to the table.

"What is the use of this?" he exclaimed aloud. "No remonstrance will deter him. He will go on to destruction. The estates will pass away from us. Perchance a few words, written at the last moment, may change him! Heaven grant it. I will try. But now to complete my task. All will soon be over!"

With this he sat down at the table, and with a strange composure resumed his writing.

XXX.

A terrible Catastrophe.

On returning to the entrance-hall Atherton found Markland the butler. The old man looked at him very wistfully, and said:

"Excuse me, sir, if I venture to say a few words to you. Has an important communication been made to you by Sir Richard?"

"A very important communication indeed," replied Atherton. "And when I tell you what it is, I think I shall surprise you."

"No, you won't surprise me in the least, sir," replied Markland. "The moment I set eyes upon you I felt certain that you were the rightful heir of this property. You are the very image of my former master, Sir Oswald. I hope Sir Richard intends to do you justice and acknowledge you?"

"Be satisfied, my good friend, he does," replied Atherton.

"I am truly glad to hear it," said Markland. "This will take off a weight that has lain on his breast for years, and make him a happy man once more. Strange! I always felt sure the infant heir

would turn up. I never believed he was dead. But I didn't expect to behold so fine a young gentleman. I hope you are not going to leave us again now you have come back."

"I must leave you for a time, Markland, however inclined I may be to stay. I have joined the prince's army, and am a captain in the Manchester Regiment."

"So I heard from the gallant Highlander who came with you. But things are changed now. Since you have become Sir Conway Rawcliffe——"

"What mean you, Markland?"

"Conway was the name of the infant heir who was stolen—he was so called after his mother, the beautiful Henrietta Conway."

"For the present I must remain Captain Legh," interrupted the young man. "Nor would I have a word breathed on the subject to your fellow-servants till I have spoken with Sir Richard. You understand?"

"Perfectly," replied the old butler. "You may rely on my discretion."

But though Markland was forbidden to give the young baronet his proper title, he could not be prevented from showing him the profoundest respect, and it was with great reverence that he conducted him to the dining-room, where they found Sergeant

Dickson seated at a table with a cold sirloin of beef before him flanked by a tankard of strong ale.

Atherton—as we shall still continue to call our hero—desired the sergeant not to disturb himself, but declined to follow his example, though urged by Markland to try a little cold beef.

The butler, however, would not be denied, but disappearing for a minute or two returned with a cobwebbed flask, which he uncorked, and then filling a big glass to the brim, handed it to the young gentleman with these words:

"This madeira was bottled some five-and-twenty years ago in the time of the former owner of this mansion, Sir Oswald Rawcliffe. I pray you taste it, Sir———I beg pardon," he added, hastily correcting himself—"I mean Captain Legh."

As Atherton placed the goblet to his lips, but did not half empty it, the butler whispered in his ear, while handing him a biscuit, "'Tis your father's wine."

Atherton gave him a look, and emptied the glass.

Another bumper was then filled for Sergeant Dickson, who smacked his lips, but declared that for his part he preferred usquebaugh.

"Usquebaugh!" exclaimed Markland, contemptuously. "Good wine is thrown away upon you, I

perceive, sergeant. Nothing better was ever drunk than this madeira. Let me prevail upon you to try it again, Sir—Captain, I mean."

But as Atherton declined, he set down the bottle beside him, and left the room.

Full half an hour elapsed before he reappeared, and then his looks so alarmed those who beheld him, that they both started to their feet.

"What is the matter?" cried Atherton, struck by a foreboding of ill. "Nothing, I trust, has happened to Sir Richard?"

"I don't know—I hope not," cried the terrified butler. "I went into the library just now to see if his honour wanted anything. To my surprise he was not there, though I had been in the entrance-hall, and hadn't seen him go out. On the writing-table was a packet, that somehow attracted my attention, and I stepped forward to look at it. It was sealed with black wax, and addressed to Sir Conway Rawcliffe, Baronet."

Atherton uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and his forebodings of ill grew stronger.

"The sight of this mysterious packet filled me with uneasiness," pursued the butler. "I laid it down, and was considering what had become of Sir Richard, when I remarked that a secret door in one of the bookcases, of which I was previously

ignorant, was standing open. Impelled by a feeling stronger than curiosity, I passed through it, and had reached the foot of a small staircase, when I heard the report of a pistol, almost immediately succeeded by a heavy fall. I guessed what had happened; but not liking to go up-stairs alone, I hurried back as fast as I could, and came to you."

"However disinclined you may feel, you must go with me, Markland," said Atherton. "I know where we shall find Sir Richard. You must also come with us, sergeant. Not a moment must be lost."

Full of the direst apprehensions they set off. As they entered the library Atherton perceived the packet, which he knew contained the unhappy man's confession, lying on the writing-table, but he did not stop to take it up.

Dashing through the secret door he threaded the passage, and ascended the narrow staircase, three steps at a time, followed by the others.

The door of the antechamber was shut, and he feared it might be locked, but it yielded instantly to his touch.

The room was empty; but it was evident that the dreadful catastrophe he anticipated had taken place in the inner room, since a dark stream of

blood could be seen trickling beneath the door, which was standing ajar.

Atherton endeavoured to push it open, but encountering some resistance, was obliged to use a slight degree of force to accomplish his object, and he then went in closely followed by the others.

A dreadful spectacle met their gaze. Stretched upon the floor, amid a pool of blood, with a pistol grasped in his hand, showing how the deed had been done, lay Sir Richard.

He had shot himself through the heart, so that his death must have been almost instantaneous.

The sight would have been ghastly enough under any circumstances; but beheld in that chamber, so full of fearful associations, it acquired additional horror. The group gathered round the body—the young baronet in his military attire—the Highlander in his accoutrements—and the old butler—formed a striking picture. That the guilty man should die there seemed like the work of retribution.

As the nephew he had so deeply injured, and deprived of his inheritance, looked down upon his dark and stern visage, now stilled in death, he could not but pity him.

"May Heaven forgive him, as I forgive him!" he ejaculated.

"If he has sinned deeply, his penitence has been sincere," said Markland, sorrowfully. "Half his time has been spent in fasting and prayer. Heaven have mercy on his sinful soul!"

"It seems to me as if he had something clutched in his left hand," remarked the sergeant.

"I think so, too," said Atherton. "See what it is."

Thereupon, Erick knelt down beside the body, and opening the fingers, which were not yet stiffened, took from them a small slip of paper, and gave it to Atherton.

It had been crushed in the death gripe, but on being unfolded, these warning words appeared:

"'Tis given to those on the point of death to see into the future, and I read danger and destruction in the expedition you have joined. Be warned by your unhappy uncle, and abandon it."

"Whatever may be the consequence, I cannot abandon the expedition," thought Atherton.

While forming this resolution, he gazed at his lifeless monitor, and it seemed to him as if a frown passed over the dead man's countenance.

XXXI.

Sir Richard Rawcliffe's Confession.

After considering what ought to be done under circumstances so painful and extraordinary, Atherton left Sergeant Dickson with the body, and then descending with Markland to the hall, ordered him to assemble the whole house without delay, and acquaint them with the dreadful catastrophe that had occurred.

Thereupon, Markland rang the alarm bell, and the summons was immediately answered by all the male part of the household, and several women, who hurried to the entrance-hall to see what was the matter.

In reply to their anxious inquiries, the butler told them what had happened, and the appalling intelligence was received with expressions of horror by the men, and by shrieks from the women—some of the latter seeming ready to faint.

Bidding all follow him who chose, Markland then led three or four stout-hearted men to the room where the dire event had occurred.

They found Sergeant Dickson watching beside

the body, and, after regarding it for a few moments with fearful curiosity, they raised it from the floor, and placed it upon the bed.

This done, they all quitted the chamber of death, and the door was locked.

Markland, however, deemed it necessary to leave a man in the anteroom, and, having taken this precaution, he descended with the others to the lower part of the house.

The sergeant then proceeded to the library to ascertain whether Captain Legh had made any change in his plans.

"No," replied Atherton, "I must return to Manchester to-night, in order to explain matters to the prince. If his royal highness can dispense with my services, I shall retire from the Manchester Regiment. If not, I must go on. That is my fixed determination."

"'Tis the resolve of a man of honour," replied the sergeant.

"I have to read through this paper, and besides, I have some directions to give," said Atherton. "But I shall start in an hour."

"Good," replied Erick. "I shall be quite ready."

And fancying Captain Legh desired to be alone, he left the room.

Shortly afterwards Markland appeared with lights, which he placed on the writing-table.

"I am very sorry to find you are resolved to go, sir," he remarked.

"If the prince can spare me I shall return at once."

"Our chance of seeing you again is but slight, sir," rejoined the butler, shaking his head. "The prince is not likely to part with you. Shall Sir Richard's groom, Holden, attend you? Should you have any message to send to me, he will bring it back."

"Yes, I will take him with me," replied Atherton. "Perhaps Miss Rawcliffe may require him."

"You have eaten nothing, sir."

"I have no appetite. But let a slight repast be prepared for me in half an hour."

The butler bowed and left the room.

As yet Atherton had only read certain portions of his unhappy uncle's confession; but he now unfolded the manuscript with the intention of carefully perusing it.

The narration, written in a firm, bold hand, ran as follows.

In the name of the Almighty Power whom I

have so deeply offended, and before whose throne I shall presently appear to answer for my manifold offences, I hereby solemnly declare that the young man now known as Atherton Legh is no other than my nephew Conway, only son of my brother Sir Oswald Rawcliffe, whom I have wickedly kept out of his inheritance for twenty years, by carrying him off when an infant, as I shall proceed to relate.

All possible reparation for the great wrong done him shall be made to my nephew. I hereby restore him all the estates and property of which he has so long been deprived, and I implore his forgiveness.

Let it not be imagined that the possession of the property and title has brought me happiness! Since I have committed this terrible crime, peace has been a stranger to my breast. My slumbers have been disturbed by fearful dreams, and when sleep has fled from my pillow my brother's angry shade has appeared before me, menacing me with eternal bale for the wrong done to his son.

Sometimes another phantom has appeared—the shade of the sweet lady who died of grief for the loss of her infant.

Though I was thus wretched, and life had become a burden to me, my heart was hardened, and

I still clung tenaciously to the lands and title I had so wickedly acquired. Though they brought me nothing but misery I could not give them up. I recoiled with terror from the scaffold that awaited me if I avowed myself a robber and a murderer, for my hands were red with the blood of Bertha, the wretched nurse.

But my conduct was not altogether ill, and I trust that the little good I have done may tell in my favour. I had consigned my nephew to the care of strangers, but I watched over him. I supplied all his wants—educated him as a gentleman—and made him a liberal allowance.

It was my intention to have greatly increased the allowance, so as in part to restore my ill-gotten gains. But this was not to be. Heaven had other designs, and mine were thwarted.

For reasons that seemed good to me, though interested in the cause, I forbade my nephew to join the rising in favour of the House of Stuart; but he heeded not my counsel.

Suddenly, when I least expected it, discovery of my crime seemed imminent. From some information he had privily received, the prince's suspicions were awakened, and he commanded me to appear before him, and answer certain questions he meant

to put to me in the presence of my nephew and my daughter.

From such a terrible ordeal as this I naturally shrank. Death appeared preferable. But before putting an end to an existence that had long been a burden to me, I resolved to make all the atonement in my power for my evil deeds. With that intent have I come here.

In the ebony cabinet standing in the library, which contains all my private papers and letters, will be found incontestable evidences that my nephew is entitled to the estates, and that he is, in fact, the long-lost Conway Rawcliffe.

'Tis meet I should die at Rawcliffe, and in the very room where the crime was committed.

That I should thus rush unbidden into the presence of my Maker may seem to be adding to the weight of my offences, and to preclude all hope of salvation, but I trust in His mercy and forgiveness. He will judge me rightfully. He knows the torments I endure, and that they drive me to madness and despair. I must end them. Whether there will be rest in the grave for my perturbed spirit remains to be seen. Of the world I have already taken leave.

To the sole being to whom my heart clings with affection—to my daughter—I must now bid an

eternal farewell! I cannot write to her, and she will understand why I cannot. I implore her prayers. When I am gone she will have no protector, and I trust that her cousin, Conway, will watch over her. My private property will be hers. Though small in comparison with Rawcliffe, 'twill be enough.

I have still much to say, for thick-coming thoughts press upon me; but I must not give them way. Were I to delay longer, my resolution might waver. Adieu, Conway! Adieu, Constance! Forgive me!—pray for me!

RICHARD RAWCLIFFE.

Enclosed within the packet was the key of the cabinet.

There was likewise another manuscript written by the unhappy baronet and signed by him, giving full particulars of the terrible occurrence alluded to; but since the reader is already acquainted with the details it is not necessary to reproduce them.

Atherton was profoundly moved by the perusal of this letter, and remained for some time buried in reflection.

Rousing himself at length from the reverie into which he had fallen, he looked round for the ebony cabinet, and easily discovered it. Unlocking it, he found that it contained a large bundle of letters and

papers labelled in the late baronet's hand, "Documents relating to Conway Rawcliffe, with proofs of his title to the Rawcliffe estate."

He searched no further. He did not even untie the bundle, feeling certain it contained all the necessary evidences; but having carefully secured Sir Richard's last letter and confession, he locked the cabinet, and put the key in his pocket.

He then rang the bell, and when Markland made his appearance, he said to him:

"Before my departure for Manchester, Markland, it is necessary that I should give you some instructions, in case I should not be able to return, for the prince may be unwilling to release me from my engagements. I am sure you have faithfully served your late unfortunate master, and I am equally sure of your attachment to his daughter, and I have therefore every confidence in you. My great anxiety is respecting Miss Rawcliffe," he continued, in accents that bespoke the deepest feeling. "Intelligence of this dreadful event will be communicated to her to-morrow. How she will bear it I know not."

"If I may venture to give an opinion, sir, and I have known the dear young lady from childhood, and am therefore well acquainted with her temperament and disposition—when the first shock is over, she will bear the bereavement with resignation and

firmness. She was familiar with Sir Richard's wayward moods, and has often feared that something dreadful would happen to him. No doubt the shock will be a terrible one to her, and I can only hope she will be equal to it."

"All precautions shall be taken to break the sad tidings to her," said Atherton. "When she comes here it is my wish that she should be treated precisely as heretofore—you understand Markland."

The butler bowed.

"I hope she will bring her cousin—*my* cousin, Miss Butler, with her. Mrs. Butler, I fear, may not be equal to the journey, but you will prepare for her, and for Father Jerome."

"Your orders shall be strictly attended to, sir," said the butler.

"And now with regard to my unfortunate uncle," paused the young baronet. "In case I am unable to return I must leave the care of everything to you. Certain formalities of justice, rendered necessary by the case, must be observed, and you will take care that nothing is neglected. On all other points Miss Rawcliffe must be consulted."

"I will not fail to consult her, sir. But I am sure she would desire that her father's remains should be laid in the vault beneath the chapel

where his ancestors repose, and that the funeral rites should be performed with the utmost privacy."

This conference ended, Atherton proceeded to the dining-room, and partook of a slight repast, after which he prepared for his departure.

The horses had already been brought round by Holden the groom, and the night being extremely dark, the court-yard was illumined by torches, their yellow glare revealing the picturesque architecture of the old mansion.

Before mounting his steed, Atherton gave his hand to Markland, who pressed it respectfully, earnestly assuring the young gentleman that all his directions should be followed out.

The old butler then took leave of the sergeant, who had been in readiness for some minutes.

In consequence of the darkness, it was deemed advisable that Holden should lead the way. Accordingly, he was the first to cross the drawbridge, but the others kept close behind him.

XXXII.

Atherton's Decision is made.

It was with strange sensations that Atherton looked back at the darkling outline of the old mansion, and when it became undistinguishable in the gloom, he felt as if he had been indulging in an idle dream.

But no! the broad domains that spread around him on either side were his own. All he could discern belonged to him.

His meditations were not disturbed by either of his attendants, for the sergeant was a short distance behind him, and the groom about twenty or thirty yards in advance. As they trotted on quickly they were soon out of the park, and were now making their way somewhat more slowly along the road leading to Warrington. Presently they turned off on the right in order to reach the ford, and were skirting the banks of the Mersey, when Holden came back and said that he perceived some men armed with muskets guarding the ford.

A brief consultation was then held. As the groom

declared that the river was only fordable at this point, Atherton resolved to go on at all hazards.

As they drew near the ford they found it guarded —as Holden had stated—by half a dozen armed militia-men, who were evidently determined to dispute their passage.

"Stand! in the king's name!" cried the leader of the party in an authoritative voice. "We can discern that one of you is a Highlander, and we believe you are all rebels and traitors. Stand! I say!"

"Rebels and traitors yourselves!" thundered the sergeant in reply. "We own no sovereign but King James the Third."

"Out of our way, fellows!" cried Atherton. "We mean to pass the ford!"

Drawing his sword as he spoke, he struck spurs into his steed, and dashed down the bank, followed closely by the sergeant and Holden—the former having likewise drawn his claymore.

The militia-men drew back but fired at them as they were crossing the river, though without doing them any harm.

Having escaped this danger, they proceeded at the same rapid pace as before, and in the same order, the groom riding about twenty yards in ad-

vance. The few travellers they met with got out of their way.

By the time they reached Chat Moss the moon had risen, and her beams illumined the dreary swamp.

The scene looked far more striking than it did by daylight, but Atherton gazed at it with a different eye. Other thoughts now occupied his breast, and he seemed changed even to himself. When he tracked that road, a few hours ago, he was a mere adventurer—without name—without fortune—now he had a title and large estates. Reflections on this sudden and extraordinary change in his position now completely engrossed him, and he fell into a reverie which lasted till he reached Pendleton, and then waking up, as if from a dream, he was astonished to find he had got so far.

From this elevation the town of Manchester could be descried, and as the houses were again illuminated, and bonfires were lighted in different quarters, it presented a very striking appearance.

Just as Atherton crossed Salford Bridge, the clock of the collegiate church tolled forth eleven, and so crowded were the streets, owing to the illuminations, that nearly another quarter of an hour was required to reach the prince's head-quarters.

Atherton was attended only by the groom, the

sergeant having gone to report himself on his return to the Chevalier de Johnstone.

Dismounting at the gate, he entered the mansion, and orders having been given to that effect he was at once admitted to the prince, who was alone in his private cabinet.

Charles instantly inquired if he had brought Sir Richard Rawcliffe with him.

"He is unable to obey your royal highness's summons," replied the other.

"How?" exclaimed the prince, frowning.

"He is lying dead at Rawcliffe, having perished by his own hand. But he has left a written confession wherein he acknowledges that he has wrongfully deprived me of my inheritance."

"This is strange indeed!" exclaimed the prince. "His extraordinary conduct to you is now explained, and the mystery that hung over your birth is solved. You are the lost son of the former baronet. I suspected as much, and meant to force the truth from Sir Richard. However, he has spared me the trouble. Pray let me know all that has occurred?"

Atherton then commenced his relation, to which the prince listened with the greatest interest, and when the story was brought to a conclusion he said:

"I will not affect to pity your unhappy uncle.

He has escaped earthly punishment, and perhaps the deep remorse he appears to have felt may obtain him mercy on High. Let us hope so—since he has striven at the last to make some amends for his heavy offences. But to turn to yourself. Your position is now materially changed. You entered my service as an unknown adventurer, and not as a wealthy baronet. Considering this, and feeling, also, that I am under great personal obligation to you, I will not wait for any solicitation on your part, but at once release you from your engagement to me."

Atherton was much moved.

"Your royal highness overwhelms me by your kindness," he said. "But though Rawcliffe Hall and its domains may be mine by right, I do not intend to deprive Constance of the property. Furthermore, I shall not assume my real name and title till the close of the campaign. For the present I shall remain Atherton Legh. I trust your highness will approve of the course I intend to pursue?"

"I do approve of it," replied Charles, earnestly. "The resolution you have taken does you honour. Since you are determined to join me, it shall not be as a mere officer in the Manchester Regiment, but as one of my aides-de-camp. All needful explanation shall be given to Colonel Townley. I

shall march at an early hour in the morning. But no matter. You can follow. You must see Constance before you leave, and if you are detained by any unforeseen cause, I will excuse you. Nay, no thanks. Good-night."

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

BOOK III.

THE MARCH TO DERBY, AND THE RETREAT.

I.

An Old Jacobite Dame.

Next morning the prince quitted Manchester, marching on foot at the head of two regiments of infantry which formed the advanced guard. The main body of the army, with the cavalry and artillery was to follow at a later hour.

As the two regiments in question, which were composed of remarkably fine men, marched up Market-street-lane, preceded by a dozen pipers, they were accompanied by a vast concourse of people, who came to witness the prince's departure, and shouted lustily as he came forth from his head-quarters, attended by Sir Thomas Sheridan and Colonel Ker.

Designing to make Macclesfield the limit of his first day's march, Charles took the road to Cheadle, and several hundred persons walked, or rather ran, by the side of the Highlanders for a mile or two, when they dropped off and returned, being unable to keep up with the active mountaineers.

Parties of men had been sent on previously to make a temporary bridge across the Mersey, by felling

trees; but the bridge not being completed on his arrival, the prince forded the river at the head of his troops.

On the opposite bank of the Mersey, several Cheshire gentlemen of good family were waiting to greet him, and wish him success in his enterprise.

Among them was an aged dame, Mrs. Skyring, who, being very infirm, was led forward by a Roman Catholic priest. Kneeling before the prince, she pressed his hand to her lips.

Much impressed by her venerable looks, Charles immediately raised her, and on learning her name, told her he had often heard of her as a devoted adherent of his house.

"Give ear to me for a few moments, I pray you, most gracious prince," she said, in faltering accents. "Eighty-five years ago, when an infant, I was lifted up in my mother's arms to see the happy landing at Dover of your great uncle, King Charles the Second. My father was a staunch Cavalier, served in the Civil Wars, and fought at Worcester. My mother was equally attached to the House of Stuart. I inherited their loyalty and devotion. When your grandsire, King James the Second, was driven from the throne, I prayed daily for his restoration."

"You did more than pray, madam," said the prince. "I am quite aware that you remitted half

your income to our family; and this you have done for more than fifty years. I thank you in my grandsire's name—in my father's name—and in my own."

Sobs checked the old lady's utterance for a moment, but at length she went on:

"When I learnt that you were marching on England at the head of an army, determined to drive out the Hanoverian usurper, and regain your crown, I was filled with despair that I could not assist you; but I sold my plate, my jewels, and every trinket I possessed. They did not produce much—not half so much as I hoped—but all they produced is in this purse. I pray your royal highness to accept it as an earnest of my devotion."

While uttering these words, which greatly touched Charles, she again bent before him, and placed the purse in his hands.

"Pain me not by a refusal, I implore you, most gracious prince," she said. "And think not you are depriving me of aught. I cannot live long, and I have no children. 'Tis the last assistance I shall be able to render your royal house—for which I have lived, and for which I would die."

"I accept the gift, madam," replied Charles, with unaffected emotion, "with as much gratitude as if you had placed a large sum at my disposal.

You are, indeed, a noble dame; and our family may well be proud of a servant so loyal! If I succeed in my enterprise, I will recompense you a hundred fold."

"I am fully recompensed by these gracious words, prince," she rejoined.

"Nay, madam," he cried, pressing her hand to his lips; "mere thanks are not enough. You have not confined yourself to words."

"My eyes are very dim, prince," said the old dame; "and what you say to me will not make me see more clearly. Yet let me look upon your face, and I will tell you what I think of you. I am too old to flatter."

"You will not offend me by plain speaking," said Charles, smiling.

"You are a true Stuart," she continued, trying to peruse his features. "But there are some lines in your comely countenance that bode——"

"Not misfortune, I trust?" said Charles, finding she hesitated.

She regarded him anxiously, and made an effort to reply, but could not.

"What ails you, madam?" cried the prince, greatly alarmed by the deathly hue that overspread her features.

Her strength was gone, and she would have fallen, if he had not caught her in his arms.

Her friends, who were standing near, rushed forward to her assistance.

"Alas, all is over!" exclaimed Charles, mournfully, as he consigned her inanimate frame to them.

"She is scarcely to be pitied, prince," said the Romish priest. "'Tis thus she desired to die. May the angels receive her soul, and present it before the Lord."

"The sum she has bestowed upon me shall buy masses for the repose of her soul," said Charles.

"Nay, prince," rejoined the priest. "Her soul is already at rest. Employ the money, I beseech you, as she requested."

Much affected by this incident, Charles continued his march through a fine champaign country, well-timbered and richly-cultivated, containing numerous homesteads, and here and there an old hall of the true Cheshire type, and comprehending views of Bowden Downs and Dunham Park on the left, with Norbury and Lyme Park on the right.

At Headforth Hall he halted with his body-guard, and claimed the hospitality of its owner; while his troops marched on to Wilmslow, and forced the inhabitants of that pretty little village to supply their wants.

From Wilmslow the prince's march was continued to Macclesfield, where he fixed his quarters at an old mansion near the Chester Gate.

II.

Atherton's Gift to Constance.

THE prince's departure from Manchester took place on Sunday, December the 1st; but as the main body of the army did not leave till the middle of the day, and great confusion prevailed in the town, no service took place in the churches.

The cavalry was drawn up in St. Ann's-square; the different regiments of infantry collected at various points in the town; and the Manchester Regiment assembled in the collegiate churchyard.

While the troops were thus getting into order, preparatory to setting out for Macclesfield, a great number of the inhabitants of the town came forth to look at them—very much increasing the tumult and confusion.

The Manchester Regiment got into marching order about noon, and was one of the first to quit the town. Officers and men were in high spirits, and looked very well.

As the regiment passed up Market-street-lane, with Colonel Townley riding at its head, the colours borne by Ensign Syddall, and the band playing, it was loudly cheered.

The regularity of the march was considerably interfered with by the number of persons who accompanied their friends as far as Didsbury, and supplied them rather too liberally with usquebaugh, ratifia, and other spirituous drinks.

The courage of the men being raised to a high pitch by these stimulants, they expressed a strong anxiety for an early engagement with the Duke of Cumberland's forces, feeling sure they should beat them.

After a short halt at Didsbury, their friends left them, and their courage was somewhat cooled by fording the river below Stockport. They were likewise obliged to wade through the little river Bollin, before reaching Wilmslow, where they halted for the night.

Atherton had not yet left Manchester. He had some business to transact which obliged him to employ a lawyer, and he was engaged with this gentleman for two or three hours in the morning. He had previously written to Constance to say that it was necessary he should see her before his departure, and as soon as his affairs were arranged he rode to Mrs. Butler's house in Salford.

Leaving his horse with Holden, by whom he was attended, he entered the garden, and was crossing the lawn, when he encountered Jemmy Dawson,

who, having just parted with Monica, looked greatly depressed.

In reply to his anxious inquiries, Jemmy informed him that Constance had borne the shock better than might have been expected, and had passed the night in prayer. "I have not seen her," he said, "but Monica tells me she is now perfectly composed, and however much she may suffer, she represses all outward manifestation of grief. In this respect she is very different from Monica herself, who, poor girl! has not her emotions under control, and I left her in a state almost of distraction."

Without a word more he hurried away, while Atherton entered the house, and was shown into a parlour on the ground floor. No one was in the room at the time, and his first step was to lay a packet on the table.

Presently Constance made her appearance. Her features were excessively pale, and bore evident traces of grief; but she was perfectly composed, and Atherton thought he had never seen her look so beautiful.

She saluted him gravely, but more distantly than before.

"I cannot condole with you on the terrible event that has occurred," he said; "but I can offer you my profound sympathy. And let me say at once that I

freely and fully forgive your unfortunate father for all the wrong he has done me."

"I thank you for the assurance," she rejoined. "'Tis an infinite relief to me, and proves the goodness of your heart."

"Do not dwell upon this, Constance," he said. "Hereafter we will talk over the matter—not now. Should you feel equal to the journey, I hope you will immediately return to Rawcliffe."

"I will return thither, with your kind permission, to see my poor father laid in the family vault. That sad duty performed I shall quit the house for ever."

"No, Constance—that must not be," he rejoined. "My object in coming hither this morning is to tell you that I do not design to dispossess you of the house and property. On the contrary, you will be as much the mistress of Rawcliffe Hall as ever—more so, perhaps. Nay, do not interrupt me—I have not finished. Many things may happen. I may meet a soldier's fate. The hazardous enterprise I am bent upon may fail—I may be captured—may die as a rebel, on the scaffold. If I should not return, the house and all within it—all the domains attached to it—are yours. By that deed I have made them over to you."

And he pointed to the packet which he had laid upon the table.

Constance was greatly moved. Tears rushed to her eyes, and for a few minutes she was so overpowered that she could not speak.

Atherton took her hand, which she did not attempt to withdraw.

"I am profoundly touched by your generosity," she said. "But I cannot accept your gift."

"Nay, you must accept it, dearest Constance," he said. "You well know you have my heart's love, and I think you will not refuse to be mine."

"'Twould be too great happiness to be yours," she rejoined. "But no—no—I ought not to consent."

By way of reply, he pressed her to his heart, and kissed her passionately.

"Now will you refuse?" he cried.

"How can I, since you have wrested my consent from me?" she rejoined. "But how am I to address you?"

"You must still call me Atherton Legh," he replied.

"Well, then, dearest Atherton, my heart misgives me. In urging you to join this expedition I fear I have done wrong. Should any misfortune happen to you I shall deem myself the cause of it. I tremble

to think of the consequences of my folly. Must you go?" she added, looking imploringly at him.

"Yes," he replied. "Not even you, dearest Constance, can turn me from my purpose. The prince has relieved me from my engagement, but I cannot honourably retire. Come what may, I shall go on."

"I will not attempt to dissuade you from your purpose," she rejoined. "But I find it doubly hard to part now. And your danger seems greater."

"Mere fancy," he said. "You love me better than you did—that is the cause of your increased apprehension."

For some moments they remained gazing at each other in silence.

At last Atherton spoke.

"'Tis with difficulty that I can tear myself away from you, dearest Constance. But I hope soon to behold you again. Meantime, you will remain at Rawcliffe Hall as I have suggested."

"I will do whatever you desire," she rejoined.

"I hope you will induce Mrs. Butler and Monica to stay with you, and that I shall find them at Rawcliffe on my return. I would not anticipate disaster —but 'tis desirable to be prepared for the worst. Should ill success attend our enterprise, and I should be compelled to seek safety in flight, I might find a hiding-place in Rawcliffe Hall."

"No doubt," she rejoined. "You could easily be concealed there—even should strict search be made. All necessary preparations shall be taken. Whenever you arrive at Rawcliffe you will find all ready for you. I will go there to-morrow, and I trust Mrs. Butler and Monica will be able to follow immediately. Will you not see them?"

"Not now," he replied. "Bid them farewell for me. If I stay longer, my resolution might give way. Remember what I have said to you. In any event you are mistress of Rawcliffe. Adieu!"

Pressing her again to his breast, he rushed out of the room.

III.

A Retreat resolved upon.

MOUNTING his horse which he had left at the gate of Mrs. Butler's residence, and followed by Holden, Atherton rode towards the bridge—being obliged to pass through the town in order to gain the Stockport road.

The place was still in a state of great confusion —none of the cavalry having as yet departed; but he contrived to make his way through the crowded thoroughfares, and was soon in the open country.

At Didsbury he overtook the Manchester Regiment and had a long conversation with Colonel Townley, who explained to him that he meant to pass the night at Wilmslow.

Atherton then pursued his journey, crossed the Mersey at Cheadle, and came up with the prince and the advanced guard about four miles from Macclesfield. He was then sent on to make preparations for his royal highness, and executed his task very satisfactorily.

On the following day, while the prince, with the infantry, continued his march to Leek, Lord George Gordon with his regiment of horse proceeded to

Congleton, and Captain Legh received orders from his royal highness to accompany him.

At Congleton information being obtained that the Duke of Cumberland was posted at Newcastle-under-Lyne with ten thousand men, Lord George went thither to reconnoitre, and found that the duke, on hearing of the onward march of the insurgent forces, had retired with his army on Lichfield.

With marvellous despatch Atherton rode across the country and brought the intelligence to Charles, who had arrived at Leek.

No change, however, was made in the prince's plans. He did not desire an engagement with the duke, but rather to elude him.

Accordingly, he pressed on, and on the fourth day after leaving Manchester, arrived with his entire forces at Derby.

Charles was still full of confidence, and as he was now a day's march nearer London than the enemy, he persuaded himself that he should be able to reach the capital without hazarding a battle. Though he had been coldly received at all places since he left Manchester, and had not obtained any more recruits, he was not discouraged.

He fixed his head-quarters at a large mansion in Full-street, which has since been demolished.

On the morning after his arrival at Derby, he

rode round the town, attended only by Colonel Ker and Captain Legh, and was very coldly received by the inhabitants—no cheers attending his progress through the streets, and many of the houses being shut up.

Much dispirited by this unfavourable reception, he returned to his head-quarters, where a council of war was held, which was attended by all the leaders of his army.

The general aspect of the assemblage was gloomy, and far from calculated to raise his spirits. Sir Thomas Sheridan alone seemed to retain his former confidence.

Graciously saluting them all, Charles said:

"I have summoned you, my lords and gentlemen, simply to inform you that after halting for another day in Derby to refresh my troops, I shall proceed with all possible despatch, and without another halt, if I can avoid it—to London—there to give battle to the usurper. From the feeling evinced towards me, I doubt not I shall obtain many recruits during the hurried march, and perhaps some important reinforcements—but be this as it may, I shall persevere in my design."

He then looked round, but as he encountered only gloomy looks, and all continued silent, he exclaimed sharply:

"How is this? Do you hesitate to follow me further?"

"Since your royal highness puts the question to us," replied Lord George Gordon, gravely, "I am bound to answer it distinctly. We think we have already done enough to prove our devotion. Feeling certain we have no chance whatever of success, we decline to throw away our lives. We have now reached the very heart of England, and our march has been unopposed, but we have obtained none of the large reinforcements promised us, and only a single regiment at Manchester. Scarcely any person of distinction has joined us—and very few have sent us funds. Since we left Manchester we have been everywhere coldly received—and here, at Derby, we are regarded with unmistakable aversion. The populace are only held in check by our numbers. Further south, the disposition would probably be still more unfavourable, and retreat would be out of the question. If your royal highness can show us letters from any persons of distinction promising aid, or can assure us that a descent upon the English shores will be made from France, we are willing to go on. If not, we must consult our own safety."

"What do I hear?" cried the prince, who had listened in the utmost consternation. "Would you

abandon me—now that we have advanced so far—now that victory is assured?"

"Our position is critical," replied Lord George. "If we advance further, our retreat will be cut off by Marshal Wade, who is close in our rear, and by the Duke of Cumberland, who has an army doubling our own in number, only a few leagues from us. If we hazard a battle, and obtain a victory, the losses we should necessarily sustain would so weaken our forces, that without reinforcements, we could not hope to vanquish the large army which we know is encamped at Finchley to secure the capital. Retreat is, therefore, unavoidable."

"Is this the unanimous opinion?" demanded Charles, looking anxiously round at the assemblage.

With the exception of Mr. Murray, the secretary, Sir Thomas Sheridan, and the Marquis d'Eguilles, every voice answered:

"It is."

"Then leave me," cried the prince, fiercely and scornfully. "Leave me to my fate. I will go on alone."

"If your royal highness will view the matter calmly, you will perceive that we are not wanting in fidelity and attachment to your person in making this proposition," said Lord Kilmarnock. "The cause here is hopeless. Let us return to Scotland, where we shall find reinforcements and obtain aid and supplies from France."

"No; I will not return to Scotland ingloriously," cried Charles.

"Listen to me, prince," said the Duke of Perth. "There is every inducement to return to Scotland, where a large force awaits you. I have just received intelligence that my brother, Lord John Drummond, has landed at Montrose with his regiment newly raised in France. With the Highlanders whom we left behind, this will make a large force—probably three thousand men."

"And no doubt there will be large additions," said Sir Thomas Sheridan. "By this time the Irish Brigade must have embarked from France, with the promised French regiments."

"There is nothing for it but a retreat to Scotland," said Lord Pitsligo. "It would be madness to face an army of thirty thousand men."

"You are a traitor like the rest, Pitsligo," cried the prince, fiercely.

The old Scottish noble flushed deeply, and with difficulty mastered his indignation.

"I never thought to hear that opprobrious term applied to me by one of your royal house, prince," he said. "But since you have stigmatised all these loyal gentlemen in the same manner, I must bear the reproach as best I can."

"Forgive me, my dear old friend," cried Charles, seizing his hand, and pressing it warmly. "I meant

not what I said. No one could possess stauncher friends than I do—no one could appreciate their devotion more profoundly than myself. But my heart is crushed by this bitter and unexpected disappointment. It has come upon me like a clap of thunder—at the very moment when I anticipated success. Since it must be so, we will retreat, though it will half kill me to give the word. Leave me now, I pray of you. I will strive to reconcile myself to the alternative."

Thus enjoined, they all quitted the chamber, and Charles was left alone.

Flinging himself into a chair he remained for some time, with his face buried in his hands.

When he raised his eyes, he saw Atherton standing beside him.

"I knew not you were here," said the prince.

"I came to learn your royal highness's commands," replied the other. "Something, I fear, has greatly disturbed you."

"Disturbed me! ay!" cried Charles. "I am forced to retreat."

"By the enemy?" exclaimed Atherton.

"By my generals," replied Charles. "We shall advance no further. You may prepare to return to Manchester."

IV.

How the Manchester Regiment was welcomed on its Return.

CHARLES could not shake off the bitter disappointment he experienced at this sudden and unlooked-for extinction of his hopes. He had made up his mind to march on London, and he thought his Highland army would follow him. But he now discovered his mistake.

He did not go forth again during the day, but shut himself up in his room, and left Lord George Gordon and the Duke of Perth to make all arrangements necessary for the retreat.

They decided to pass through Manchester on the way to Carlisle. The men were kept in profound ignorance of the change of plan, but when they discovered that they were retreating their rage and disappointment found vent in the wildest lamentations. "Had they been beaten," says the Chevalier de Johnstone, "their grief could not have been greater." It was almost feared they would mutiny.

On the Manchester Regiment the retreat had a most dispiriting effect. Officers and men had

joined on the understanding that they were to march to London, and they were deeply mortified when they found they were to retreat to Scotland.

The men looked sullen and downcast, and so many desertions took place that the ranks were perceptibly thinned. It was certain that two or three of the officers only waited a favourable opportunity to escape.

On the third day the Manchester Regiment, which formed part of the advanced guard, arrived at Macclesfield. Next morning, at an early hour, they proceeded to Manchester. Alarming reports had been spread that the Duke of Cumberland was in hot pursuit with his whole army; but the rumour turned out to be false.

If the officers and men composing the insurgent army expected a reception like that they had previously experienced in Manchester, they were greatly mistaken. No sooner was the town cleared of the invading army, than the Whigs and Presbyterians resumed their influence, and the fickle mob changed with them.

Tumultuous crowds now went about the town shouting "Down with the Pretender! Down with the Jacobites!" Nor did the authorities interfere, but let them have their own way.

In consequence of this license, great mischief was done. The mob threatened to pull down Dr. Deacon's house in Fennel-street, broke his windows, and might have proceeded to frightful extremities if they had laid hands upon him.

Two days afterwards a rumour was designedly spread by the Presbyterians that Marshal Wade had arrived at Rochdale with his army, and would shortly enter Manchester; and this had the effect intended of exciting the mob to further violence. The rumour, however, had no foundation, and the tumult began to subside.

Meantime, the magistrates and many of the important personages who had quitted the town, began to return, thinking the danger was past, and something like order was restored.

The position, however, of the Jacobites was by no means secure, since disturbances might at any time occur, and they were afforded very little protection.

After the lapse of a week, during which reliable intelligence had been received that the Highland army had arrived at Derby without encountering any opposition, and even staunch Whigs had began to think that the intrepid young prince would actually succeed in reaching London, news came that the rebels were retreating without a battle, and were then at Leek on their way back.

At first this news, which appeared improbable, was received with incredulity, but it was speedily confirmed by other messengers.

A consultation was then held by the borough-reeve, constables, and other magistrates as to the possibility of offering any resistance; but as the militia had been disbanded, and it was doubtful whether Marshal Wade would come to their assistance, the idea was given up.

But after some discussion Dr. Mainwaring and Justice Bradshaw sent the bellman round to give notice that, as the rebels might be speedily expected, all the loyal inhabitants were enjoined to rise and arm themselves with guns, swords, halberts, pickaxes, shovels, or any other weapons, to resist the rebels, and prevent them from entering the town until the arrival of the king's forces.

In consequence of this notice several thousand persons, armed in the manner suggested, assembled in the open fields beyond Market-street-lane, where they were harangued by Dr. Mainwaring, who urged them to spoil the roads by breaking them up, and throwing trees across them, and promised to send the country folk to their aid.

Having uttered this he left the defence of the town to the inhabitants, and rode off; but he fulfilled his promise, and sent a number of country

folk armed with scythes and sickles, but these rough fellows caused such a tumult that another notice had to be given by the bellman commanding the mob to lay down their arms and disperse, and the country folk to return to their domiciles.

These contradictory orders produced considerable dissatisfaction, and were not obeyed.

One party more valiant than the rest marched to Cheadle ford, under the leadership of Mr. Hilton, with the intention of destroying the temporary bridge contrived by the insurgents, but before they could accomplish their task, they were disturbed and ignominiously put to flight by Colonel Townley and the Manchester Regiment.

On arriving at Manchester, Colonel Townley and his men were welcomed by a shower of stones and other missiles from the mob assembled at the top of Market-street-lane. Upon this the colonel called out that if another stone was thrown, and the mob did not quietly disperse, he would fire upon them.

Alarmed by the menacing looks of the soldiers, who were greatly incensed by this treatment on the part of their fellow-townsmen, the mob took to their heels.

During a subsequent disturbance Ensign Syddall was taken prisoner, but was rescued by his comrades.

VI.

A Fresh Subsidy demanded.

On the arrival of the prince with the main body of the army, comparative tranquillity was restored. But it was evident that the feeling of the inhabitants was totally changed. There were no joyful demonstrations—no bonfires—no illuminations.

Charles returned to his former residence at the top of Market-street-lane; the Duke of Perth, Lord Tullibardine, Lord George Murray, Lord Pitsligo, and the other Scottish nobles and chiefs repaired to the houses they had previously occupied; and the men billeted themselves in their old quarters. But so unfriendly were the inhabitants to the Manchester Regiment that it was with difficulty that the officers and men could find quarters.

As night drew on, and a tendency to riot was again manifested, the bellman was sent round to warn the inhabitants that not more than two persons would be allowed to walk together in the streets after dark, unless guarded by the prince's troops, and that any attempt at tumult or disturbance would be severely punished.

In addition to this pickets of men patrolled the streets throughout the night, so that the town was kept tolerably quiet.

On the same evening about eight o'clock a meeting of the principal inhabitants took place at the Bull's Head—a warrant having been sent to the magistrates by the prince's secretary, Mr. Murray, commanding them, on pain of military execution, to raise a subsidy of five thousand pounds from the town by four o'clock on the following day.

"What is to be done?" demanded Mr. Walley. "I fear it will be impossible to raise the large sum required by the appointed time—and if we fail we are to be held responsible with our lives. You must help us, gentlemen."

And he looked round at the assemblage, but no offer was made.

"Surely, you won't allow us to be shot?" cried Mr. Fowden.

"This is a mere threat," said old Mr. James Bayley, an eminent merchant of the town. "The prince cannot be in earnest."

"You are mistaken, Mr. Bayley," rejoined Mr. Fowden. "It is no idle threat. The prince is so highly offended by the reception given him that he has laid this heavy tax upon the town—and he will have it paid."

"The contributions must be levied by force," observed Mr. Walley. "We shall never get the money in any other way."

"Such a course will render you extremely unpopular," observed Mr. Bayley.

"Better be unpopular than be shot, Mr. Bayley," rejoined Mr. Fowden. "Try to place yourselves in our position, gentlemen. Will you help us to pay the money in case we should be driven to extremity?"

But no answer was made to the appeal, and the magistrates were in despair.

At this moment the door opened, and Colonel Townley, attended by Captain Dawson, Captain Deacon, and Ensign Syddall, entered the room.

The magistrates rose in consternation, wondering what was the meaning of the visit.

"Pardon my intrusion, gentlemen," said the colonel, saluting them. "But I think I can help you out of a difficulty. I am aware that five thousand pounds must be raised from the town by tomorrow afternoon. Feeling certain you will never be able to accomplish this task unassisted, I beg to offer you my aid. You shall have a party of men, under the command of these officers, to go round with you, and help you to make the collection."

"We gladly accept your offer, colonel," cried both magistrates eagerly.

"The plan will relieve you from all personal responsibility," said Townley; "and will secure the contributions."

The magistrates were profuse in their thanks, and it was then arranged that the party should commence their rounds at an early hour next morning.

VI.

A False Message brought to Helen.

HELEN CARNEGIE had not accompanied her lover in the march to Derby, but had been persuaded by Beppy Byrom to remain with her at Manchester. Thinking that an immediate engagement with the Duke of Cumberland was inevitable, the sergeant consented to the arrangement; but he missed his faithful companion sadly. He had become so accustomed to having her by his side that it seemed as if he had lost his right hand. He tried to occupy his thoughts by strict attention to his duty—but it would not do. So miserable did he feel at the separation, that he was half reconciled to the retreat from Derby by the thought that he should soon see her again.

Helen suffered quite as much—perhaps more. Independently of being constantly near her lover, it had been her pride and pleasure to be with the Highland army, and when the troops moved off without her, she felt as if her heart would break, and she would certainly have followed, if she had not been restrained by Beppy. Familiar as she was

with all the various incidents of a march, she pictured them to herself with the greatest distinctness, and spoke of all that the sergeant was doing.

"Oh! he win miss me sairly," she cried. "He win want me to cheer him up, when his spirits are low. I ought not to have left him. And what if he shouldna come back!"

"Don't make yourself uneasy, Helen," said Beppy. "He is certain to return. Papa says the prince's army will be forced to retreat."

"Na! na! that win never be!" cried Helen. "The prince win never turn back! The Highlanders may be all kilt, but turn back!—never!"

The rumour, however, at length reached Manchester that the prince was actually retreating, and Helen's delight at the thought of seeing her lover again quite overcame her vexation at what she looked upon as a disgrace.

But the regiment to which the sergeant belonged, and which was commanded by the Chevalier de Johnstone, did not reach Manchester till late in the day, and Erick having a great deal to do on his arrival, could not present himself to Helen.

She had been in quest of him, but had encountered Captain Lindsay, who addressed her more boldly than ever, and to escape his persecutions she was compelled to return.

As evening came her anxiety increased, and she was in all the agony of expectation, when a message came from her lover.

It was brought by Rollo, who informed her that the sergeant had just arrived with his regiment, and wished to see her immediately.

"Where is he?" asked Helen. "Why does he not come to me, himself?"

"He would come, if he could," replied Rollo; "but he is busy with the men in St. Ann's-square. Come with me and I will take you to him."

Wholly unsuspicious of ill, Helen instantly prepared to accompany the messenger, and they quitted the house together.

The night was dark but clear, and, as they crossed the churchyard, she perceived a tall Highland officer advancing towards her, and guessing who it was, she stopped, and said to Rollo, "What is Captain Lindsay doing here?"

"How should I know?" rejoined the other. "He won't meddle with us. Come on. I'll take care of you."

"I don't feel sure of that," she cried. "I shall go back."

"No, you won't," said Rollo, seizing her arm, and detaining her.

"Ah! you have basely betrayed me," she cried. "But Sergeant Dickson will punish you."

Rollo replied by a coarse laugh, and the next moment Captain Lindsay came up.

"Free me from this man," she cried.

"He is acting by my orders, Helen," said Lindsay. "This time I have taken such precautions that you cannot escape me."

"You cannot mean to carry me off against my will, Captain Lindsay," she cried. "I winna believe it of ye."

"I hope you will come quietly, Helen," he said, "and not compel me to resort to force. But come you shall."

"Never!" she rejoined. "Ye ken fu' weel that I am Erick Dickson's affianced wife. 'Twad be an infamy if ye were to tae me frae him."

"I care not," replied Lindsay. "I am determined to make you mine. Fleet horses and trusty men are waiting outside the churchyard to bear you off. In half an hour you will be far from Manchester, and out of Erick's reach."

"If ye hae the heart o' a man, Rollo, ye will not aid in this wicked deed," cried Helen.

But Rollo shook his head, and she made another appeal to Captain Lindsay.

"Let me gae for pity's sake," she cried. "I wad kneel to you, if I could."

"No, no, Helen," he rejoined. "I don't mean to part with you. But we waste time. Bring her along."

Finding all entreaties unavailing, and that she could not extricate herself from Rollo, who was a very powerful man, the unfortunate girl uttered a loud shriek; but her cries were instantly stifled by Captain Lindsay, who took off his scarf, and threw it over her head.

But her cry had reached other ears than they expected. As they were hurrying her towards the spot where the horses were waiting for them, a well-known voice was heard, exclaiming:

"Haud there, ye waur than rievers. When I saw the horses outside the kirkyard, and noticed that one on 'em had a pillion, I suspected something wrang; but when I heard the cry, I felt sure. Set her down, ye villains!" cried Sergeant Dickson, rushing towards them.

"Heed him not, Rollo," said Captain Lindsay. "Place her on the pillion and ride off with her. Leave me to deal with the noisy fool."

And, as he spoke, he drew his sword, planted himself in Dickson's way, while Rollo moved off with his burden.

"Ye had better not hinder me, captain," cried the half-maddened sergeant, drawing a pistol. "Bid that dastardly ruffian set her down at once, or I'll send a bullet through your head."

"You dare not," said Lindsay, contemptuously.

"I will not see her stolen from me," cried the sergeant, furiously. "Set her down, I say."

But finding his cries disregarded, he fired, and Captain Lindsay fell dead at his feet.

On hearing the report of the pistol, Rollo looked round, and seeing what had happened, instantly set down Helen and fled. Extricating herself from the scarf, Helen rushed towards the spot where the unfortunate officer was lying. Her lover was kneeling beside the body.

"Wae's me, Helen!" he exclaimed. "Wae's me, I hae kilt the captain."

"Ye canna be blamed for his death, Erick," she rejoined. "He brought his punishment on himsel."

"I shall die for it, nevertheless, lassie," he rejoined.

"Die! you die, Erick, for savin' me frae dishonour!" she cried.

"Ay, ay, lass. He was my superior officer, and by the rules of war I shall die. No escape for me."

"Oh! if you think sae, Erick, let us flee before ye can be taken," she cried. "Come wi' me."

"Na! na!" he rejoined, gently resisting her. "I maun answer for what I hae done. Leave me, lassie; gae back to the young leddy. Tell her what has happened, and she will take care of you."

"Na, Erick, I winna leave you," she rejoined. "If ye are to dee, I'se e'en dee wi' ye. Och!" she exclaimed, "here they come to tak ye! Get up, lad, and flee!"

As a file of soldiers could be seen approaching, the sergeant rose to his feet, but did not attempt to fly.

Immediately afterwards the soldiers came up. With them were two or three men bearing torches, and as these were held down, the unfortunate officer could be seen lying on his back, with his skull shattered by the bullet.

The sergeant averted his gaze from the ghastly spectacle.

The soldiers belonged to the Manchester Regiment, and at their head was Captain Dawson.

"How did this sad event occur, sergeant?" demanded Jemmy, after he had examined the body.

"Captain Lindsay fell by my hand," replied Dickson. "I surrender myself your prisoner, and am ready to answer for the deed."

"You must have done it in self-defence," said Jemmy. "I know you too well to suppose you could have committed such a crime without some strong motive."

"The deed was done in my rescue," cried Helen. "Captain Lindsay was carrying me off when he was shot."

"I trust that will save him from the consequences of the act," replied Jemmy, sadly. "My duty is to deliver him to the provost-marshal."

"That is all that I could desire," said the sergeant. "I ask no greater favour from you."

"Oh! let me gae wi' him—let me gae wi' him," cried Helen, distractedly. "I am the sad cause of it a'."

"Ye canna gang wi' me, lassie, unless you compose yersel," said the sergeant, somewhat sternly.

"Dinna fear me—dinna fear me—I winna greet mair," she cried, controlling her emotion by a powerful effort.

"May she walk by my side to the guard-room, Captain Dawson?" asked the sergeant.

"She may," replied the other, adding to the men, "conduct the prisoner to the guard-room near the prince's quarters."

The sergeant was then deprived of his arms, and the pistol with which he had fired the fatal

shot was picked up, and preserved as evidence against him.

As Erick and Helen were marched off in the midst of the guard, another file of men entered the churchyard, took up the body of the unfortunate Captain Lindsay, and conveyed it to the quarters of the commanding officer.

VII.

A Court-Martial.

DELIVERED over to the custody of the provost, the unfortunate Sergeant Dickson was placed in the guard-room near the prince's head-quarters, and a sentinel was stationed at the door. Helen was allowed to remain with him. The greatest sympathy was felt for the sergeant, for he was a universal favourite.

Full of anxiety, Captain Dawson sought an interview with the prince, who though engaged on business immediately received him.

Charles looked very grave.

"I am greatly distressed by what has happened," he said. "There is not a man in my whole army for whom I have a greater regard than Erick Dickson, but I fear his sentence will be death. However, I will do what I can for him. A court-martial shall be held immediately, and I have sent for Lord George Murray to preside over it, and we must wait the result of the investigation. As yet I cannot interfere."

As the prince had ordered that the examination

should take place without delay, a court-martial was held in a room on the ground floor of the mansion occupied by his royal highness. Lord George Gordon presided, and with him were Lord Elcho, Lord Pitsligo, Colonel Townley, and the Chevalier de Johnstone; Captain Legh, Captain Deacon, Captain Dawson, and several other officers were likewise present.

The president occupied a raised chair at the head of the table, round which the others were seated. The room was only imperfectly lighted.

After a short deliberation, the prisoner was brought in by two soldiers, who stood on either side of him.

Bowing respectfully to the court, he drew himself up to his full height, and maintained a firm deportment throughout his examination.

"Sergeant Dickson," said Lord George Murray, in a stern and solemn voice, "you are charged with the dreadful crime of murder—aggravated in your instance, because your hand has been raised against your superior officer. If you have aught to state in mitigation of your offence, the court will listen to you."

"My lord," replied Dickson, firmly, "I confess myself guilty of the crime with which I am charged. I did shoot Captain Lindsay, but perhaps the pro-

vocation I received, which roused me beyond all endurance, may be held as some extenuation of the offence. Nothing, I am well aware, can justify the act. My lord, I could not see the girl I love carried off before my eyes, and not demand her release. Captain Lindsay refused—mocked me—and I shot him. That is all I have to say."

Brief as was this address, it produced a most powerful effect. After a short deliberation by the court, Lord George thus addressed the prisoner:

"Sergeant Dickson, since you acknowledge your guilt, it is not necessary to pursue the examination, but before pronouncing sentence, the court desires to interrogate Helen Carnegie."

"She is without, my lord," replied the sergeant.

On the order of Lord George, Helen was then introduced, and as she was well known to the president, and to every member of the council, the greatest sympathy was manifested for her.

She was very pale, and did not venture to look at the sergeant lest her composure should be shaken, but made a simple reverence to the president and the council.

"Sergeant Dickson has confessed his guilt, Helen," observed Lord George. "But we desire to have some information from your lips. How came you to meet Captain Lindsay in the churchyard?"

"I did na meet him, my lord," she replied, with indignation. "It was a base and dishonourable trick on his part. Little did I ken that he was lyin' in wait for me. Rollo Forbes brought me word that Erick wished me to come to him, and when I went forth into the kirkyard, Captain Lindsay seized me, and wad have carried me aff. He has long persecuted me wi' his addresses, but I ha' gien him nae encouragement, and wad ha' shunned him if I could. A scarf was thrown over my head by the captain to stifle my cries, and had not Erick came to my rescue I should ha' been carried off. Captain Lindsay deserved his fate, and so all men will feel who prize their sweethearts. Erick was bound to defend me."

"His first duty was to observe the rules of war," remarked Lord George, sternly. "We are willing to believe your story, Helen, but we have no proof that you did not voluntarily meet Captain Lindsay."

"That fawse villain, Rollo, has fled, but there is a young leddy without, my lord—Miss Byrom—who will testify to the truth of my statement, if you will hear her."

"Let her come in," said the president.

Beppy Byrom was then introduced.

She was accompanied by her father, who remained near her during her brief examination.

Though looking very pale, Beppy was perfectly self-possessed, and quite confirmed Helen's statement that she had been lured from the house by a supposed message from the sergeant; adding emphatically:

"I am sure she would never have gone forth to meet Captain Lindsay, for I know she detested him."

"Ay, that I did!" exclaimed Helen, unable to control her feelings, and wholly unconscious that she was guilty of disrespect.

Lord George then ordered the court to be cleared, and Beppy and Dr. Byrom went out, but Helen, scarcely comprehending the order, did not move, till her arm was touched by the officer.

She then cast an agonised look at Erick, and would have flung herself into his arms if she had not been prevented.

As she went out, she turned to the judges and said,

"Be merciful to him, I pray you, my lords."

The court then deliberated for a short time, during which Lord George was earnestly addressed in a low tone both by Colonel Townley and the

Chevalier de Johnstone, but his countenance remained very grave.

At last, amid profound silence, he addressed the prisoner in the following terms: "Sergeant Dickson, the court has taken into consideration your excellent character, and the strong provocation that impelled you to commit this desperate act, and which certainly mitigates the offence, and such is our pity for you, that, were it in our power we would pardon your offence, or at all events would visit it with a slight punishment; but we have no option—leniency on our part would be culpable. You have murdered an officer, and must die. Sentence of death is therefore passed upon you by the court."

"I expected this, my lord," observed the sergeant, firmly, "and am prepared to meet my fate. But I would not die as a murderer."

"The crime you have committed is murder," said Lord George; "and I can hold out no hope whatever of pardon. You are too good a soldier not to know that if your life were spared it would be an ill example to the army, besides being a violation of the law."

An awful pause ensued.

The profound silence was then broken by the prisoner, who said, in a low, firm voice:

"All the grace I will ask from your lordship and

the court is, that execution of the sentence you have passed upon me, the justice of which I do not deny may not be delayed."

"We willingly grant your request," replied Lord George. "The execution shall take place at an early hour in the morning."

"I humbly thank your lordship," said Dickson. "But I would further pray that my affianced wife, who has been unwittingly the cause of this disaster, be permitted to bear me company during the few hours I have left; and that she also be permitted to attend my execution."

"To the former part of the request there can be no objection," said Lord George. "Helen shall remain with you during the night, but she can scarcely desire to be present at your execution."

"She will never leave me to the last," said the sergeant.

"Be it as you will," replied Lord George.

The sergeant was then removed by the guard, and given in charge of the provost, and the court broke up.

VIII.

Helen Pleads in Vain.

IMMEDIATELY after the breaking up of the court, Lord George Gordon and the other members of the council waited upon the prince to acquaint him with their decision.

Though greatly pained, he thought they were right, and after some discussion they retired and left him alone.

But the prince was so much troubled, that though excessively fatigued he could not retire to rest, but continued to pace his chamber till past midnight, when Captain Dawson entered and informed him that Miss Byrom earnestly craved an audience of him.

"She is not alone," added Jemmy. "Helen Carnegie is with her."

Charles hesitated for a short time, and said, "I would have avoided this, if possible. But let them come in."

Beppy was then ushered in by Jemmy, and made a profound obeisance to the prince.

Behind her stood Helen, who seemed quite overwhelmed with grief.

"I trust your highness will pardon me," said Beppy. "I have consented to accompany this poor heart-broken girl, and I am sure you will listen to her, and if possible grant her prayer."

"I will readily listen to what she has to say," replied the prince, in a compassionate tone; "but I can hold out little hope."

"Oh, do not say so, most gracious prince!" cried Helen, springing forward, and catching his hand, while he averted his face. "For the love of Heaven have pity upon him! His death win be my death, for I canna survive him. Ye havena a mair leal subject nor a better sodger than Erick Dickson. Willingly wad he shed his heart's bluid for ye! Were he to dee, claymore in hand, for you, I should not lament him—but to dee the death o' a red-handed murtherer, is not fit for a brave man like Erick."

"I feel the force of all you say, Helen," replied Charles, sadly. "Erick is brave and loyal, and has served me well."

"Then show him mercy, sweet prince," she rejoined. "He is no murtherer — not he! Pit the case to yersel, prince. Wad ye hae seen the mistress o' yer heart carried off, and not hae slain the base villain who took her? I ken not."

"'Tis hard to tell what I might do, Helen," ob-

served Charles. "But the rules of war cannot be broken. A court-martial has been held, and has pronounced its sentence. I must not reverse it."

"But you are above the court-martial, prince," she cried. "You can change its decree. If any one is guilty—'tis I! Had I not come wi' Erick this wad never have happened. He has committed no other fawt."

"On the contrary, he has always done his duty—done it well," said the prince. "Both Colonel Johnstone and Colonel Townley have testified strongly in his favour. But I required no testimony, for I well know what he has done."

"And yet ye winna pardon him?" she cried, reproachfully.

"I cannot, Helen—I cannot," replied Charles. "My heart bleeds for you, but I must be firm."

"Think not you will set an ill example by showing mercy in this instance, prince," she said. "Erick's worth and valour are known. Sae beloved is he, that were there time, hundreds of his comrades wad beg his life. If he be put to death for nae fawt, men win think he has been cruelly dealt with."

"You go too far, Helen," said the prince, compassionately. "But I do not blame your zeal."

"Pardon me, sweet prince—pardon me if I have said mair than I ought. My heart overflows, and I must gie vent to my feelings, or it will break. Oh! that I were able to touch your heart, prince!"

"You do touch it, Helen. Never did I feel greater difficulty in acting firmly than I do at this moment."

"Then yield to your feelings, prince—yield to them, I implore you," she cried, passionately. "Oh, madam!" she added to Beppy, "join your prayers to mine, and perchance his highness may listen to us!"

Thus urged, Beppy knelt by Helen's side, and said, in an earnest voice:

"I would plead earnestly with you, prince, to spare Erick. By putting him to death you will deprive yourself of an excellent soldier, whose place you can ill supply."

"Very true," murmured Charles. "Very true."

"Then listen to the promptings of your own heart, which counsels you to spare him," she continued.

For a moment it seemed as if Charles was about to yield, but he remained firm, and raising her from her kneeling posture, said:

"This interview must not be prolonged."

Helen, however, would not rise, but clung to his knees, exclaiming, distractedly:

"Ye winna kill him! ye winna kill him!"

Jemmy removed her gently, and with Beppy's aid she was taken from the room.

IX.

Together to the Last.

For a few minutes after her removal from the cabinet, Helen was in a state of distraction, but at length she listened to Beppy's consolations and grew calmer.

She then besought Captain Dawson to take her to the guard-chamber, where Erick was confined. Before going thither she bade adieu to Beppy. It was a sad parting, and drew tears from those who witnessed it.

"Fare ye weel, dear young leddy!" she said. "May every blessing leet upon your bonnie head, and on that ov yer dear, gude feyther! Most like I shan never see you again on this airth, but I hope you win sometimes think o' the puir Scottish lassie that lood ye weel!"

"Heaven strengthen you and support you, Helen!" cried Beppy, kissing her. "I trust we shall meet again."

"Dinna think it," replied the other, sadly. "I hope and trust we may meet again in a better world."

Beppy could make no reply—her heart was too full.

Embracing the poor girl affectionately, she hurried to her father who was waiting for her, and hastily quitted the house.

Helen was then conducted to the guard-room in which the sergeant was confined.

Erick was seated on a wooden stool near a small table, on which a light was placed, and was reading the Bible. He rose on her entrance, and looked inquiringly at her.

"Na hope, Erick," she said, mournfully.

"I had nane, lassie," he replied.

They passed several hours of the night in calm converse, talking of the past, and of the happy hours they had spent together, but at last Helen yielded to fatigue, and when the guard entered the chamber he found her asleep with her head resting on Erick's shoulder.

The man retired gently without disturbing her.

Meanwhile, the warrant signed by Lord George Gordon, appointing the execution to take place at seven o'clock in the morning, had been delivered to the Chevalier de Johnstone, as commander of the corps to which the unfortunate sergeant belonged, and all the necessary preparations had been made.

There was some difficulty in arranging the execution party, for the sergeant was so much beloved that none of his comrades would undertake the dreadful task, alleging that their aim would not be steady. No Highlander, indeed, could be found to shoot him.

Recourse was then had to the Manchester Regiment, and from this corps a dozen men were selected.

The place of execution was fixed in an open field at the back of Market-street-lane, and at no great distance from the prince's residence.

The Rev. Mr. Coppock, chaplain of the regiment, volunteered to attend the prisoner.

Helen slept on peacefully till near six o'clock, when a noise, caused by the entrance of Colonel Johnstone and Mr. Coppock, aroused her, and she started up.

"Oh! I have had such a pleasant dream, Erick," she said. "I thought we were in the Highlands together. But I woke, and find mysel here," she added, with a shudder.

"Well, you will soon be in the Highlands again, dear lassie," he said.

She looked at him wistfully, but made no answer.

"Are you prepared, sergeant?" asked Colonel Johnstone, after bidding him good morrow.

"I am, sir," replied Dickson.

"'Tis well," said the colonel. "In half an hour you will set forth. Employ the interval in prayer."

Colonel Johnstone then retired, and the chaplain began to perform the sacred rites, in which both Erick and Helen took part.

Just as Mr. Coppock had finished, the sound of martial footsteps was heard outside, and immediately afterwards the door was opened and the provost entered the chamber, attended by a couple of men. Behind them came Colonel Johnstone.

"Bind him," said the provost, to his aids.

"Must this be?" cried Dickson.

"'Tis part of the regulation," rejoined the provost.

"It need not be observed on the present occasion," said Colonel Johnstone. "I will answer for the prisoner's quiet deportment."

"You need fear nothing from me, sir," said Dickson.

"I will take your word," rejoined the provost. "Let his arms remain free," he added to the men.

The order to march being given, the door was thrown open, and all passed out.

Outside was a detachment from the corps to which Sergeant Dickson had belonged. With them was the execution party, consisting of a dozen picked men from the Manchester Regiment, commanded by Ensign Syddall, who looked very sad. The detachment of Highlanders likewise looked very sorrowful. With them were a piper and a drummer. The pipes were draped in black, and the drum muffled. Though the morning was dull and dark, a good many persons were looking on, apparently much impressed by the scene.

Having placed himself at the head of the detachment, Colonel Johnstone gave the word to march, and the men moved slowly on. The muffled drum was beaten, and the pipes uttered a low wailing sound very doleful to hear.

Then came Erick, with Helen by his side, and attended by the chaplain.

The sergeant's deportment was resolute, and he held his head erect. He was in full Highland costume, and wore his bonnet and scarf.

All the spectators were struck by his tall fine figure, and grieved that such a splendid man should be put to death.

But Helen excited the greatest sympathy. Though

her features were excessively pale, they had lost none of their beauty. The occasional quivering of her lip was the only external sign of emotion, her step being light and firm. Her eyes were constantly fixed upon her lover.

Prayers were read by the chaplain as they marched along.

The execution party brought up the rear of the melancholy procession. As it moved slowly through a side street towards the field, the number of spectators increased, but the greatest decorum was observed.

At length the place of execution was reached. It was the spot where the attempt had been made to capture the prince; and on that dull and dismal morning had a very gloomy appearance, quite in harmony with the tragical event about to take place.

On reaching the centre of the field, the detachment of Highlanders formed a semicircle, and a general halt took place—the prisoner and those with him standing in the midst, and the execution party remaining at the back.

Some short prayers were then recited by Mr. Coppock, in which both the sergeant and Helen joined very earnestly.

These prayers over, the sergeant took leave of Helen, and strained her to his breast.

At this moment, her firmness seemed to desert her, and her head fell upon his shoulder. Colonel Johnstone stepped forward, and took her gently away.

The provost then ordered a handkerchief to be bound over the sergeant's eyes, but at the prisoner's earnest request this formality was omitted.

The fatal moment had now arrived. The detachment of Highlanders drew back, and Erick knelt down.

The execution party made ready, and moved up within six or seven yards of the kneeling man.

"Fire!" exclaimed Syddall, and the fatal discharge took place—doubly fatal as it turned out.

At the very instant when the word was given by Syddall, Helen rushed up to her lover, and kneeling by his side, died with him.

Her faithful breast was pierced by the same shower of bullets that stopped the beating of his valiant heart.

X.

Mr. James Bayley.

In spite of the exertions of the magistrates only a very small sum could be obtained from the inhabitants of the town, upon which another meeting took place at the Bull's Head, and a deputation was formed to wait upon the prince.

Accordingly, a large body of gentlemen proceeded to the prince's head-quarters, and some half-dozen of them, including the two magistrates and Mr. James Bayley, were ushered into the council-chamber, where they found Charles and his secretary.

Mr. Fowden, who acted as spokesman, represented to the prince the utter impossibility of raising the money, and besought that the payment might be excused.

Charles, however, answered sternly:

"Your fellow-townsmen have behaved so badly that they deserve no consideration from me. The subsidy must be paid."

"I do not see how it can be accomplished," said Mr. Fowden.

"If it is not paid by one o'clock, you will incur the penalty," rejoined Mr. Murray. "Meantime, stringent measures must be adopted. I am aware, Mr. Bayley, that you are one of the wealthiest merchants of the town, and I shall therefore detain you as a hostage for the payment. If the money is not forthcoming at the appointed time, we shall carry you along with us."

"Surely your royal highness will not countenance this severity," said Mr. Bayley, appealing to the prince. "I have not slept out of my own house for the last two years, and am quite unable to travel. If I am forced off in this manner I shall have a dangerous illness."

"I cannot part with you, Mr. Bayley," said the prince. "But I will put you to as little personal inconvenience as possible. You shall have my carriage."

"I humbly thank your royal highness for your consideration, but I still hope I may be excused on the score of my age and infirmities."

"You cannot expect it, Mr. Bayley," interposed Mr. Murray. "Your case is not so bad as that of the two magistrates, who will certainly be shot if the money is not forthcoming."

"We have done our best to raise it, but we find it quite impossible," said Mr. Fowden. "The amount

is too large. I do not think there is five thousand pounds in the whole town."

"I am sure there is not," added Mr. Walley, with a groan.

"Since you give me this positive assurance, gentlemen," said Charles, "I consent to reduce the amount to half. But I will make no further concession. Meantime, Mr. Bayley must remain a prisoner."

"I pray your royal highness to listen to me," said the old gentleman. "By detaining me you will defeat your object. If I am kept here I can do nothing, but if you will allow me to go free I may be able to borrow the money."

Apparently convinced by this reasoning, Charles spoke to his secretary, who said:

"Mr. Bayley, if you will give the prince your word of honour that you will bring him the sum of two thousand five hundred pounds in two hours, or return and surrender yourself a prisoner, his royal highness is willing to set you at liberty."

"I agree to the conditions," replied the old gentleman.

With a profound obeisance to the prince, he then withdrew with the magistrates.

Accompanied by the rest of the deputation, who had waited outside in the hall, Mr. Bayley returned to the Bull's Head, where a conference was held.

After some discussion, Mr. Bayley thus addressed the assemblage: "You see, gentlemen, the very serious position in which I am placed—and our worthy magistrates are still worse off. The money must be raised—that is certain. Let us regard it as a business transaction. You shall lend me the sum required. I and my friend Mr. Dickenson will give you our promissory notes at three months for the amount."

The proposition was immediately agreed to. The meeting broke up, and in less than an hour the money was brought to Mr. Bayley. Promissory notes were given in exchange, and the sum required was taken to Mr. Murray by the two magistrates, who were thus freed from further responsibility.

XI.

The Vision.

NEARLY a fortnight had passed since Constance's return to Rawcliffe Hall, and during that interval much had happened. Sir Richard had been laid in the family vault. The interment took place at night, and was witnessed only by the household, the last rites being performed by Father Jerome. Mrs. Butler and her daughter were now inmates of the hall, but the old lady seldom left her chamber. Gloom seemed to have settled upon the mansion. The two young damsels never strayed beyond the park, and rarely beyond the garden. As yet, they had received no tidings of the Highland army except that it had arrived at Derby. They knew nothing of the retreat, and fancied that the prince was on his way to London. The next news they received might be of a glorious victory—or of a signal defeat. Rumours there were of all kinds, but to these they attached no importance.

It was a dark dull December afternoon, and the principal inmates of the hall were assembled in the library. A cheerful fire blazed on the hearth, and

lighted up the sombre apartment. Father Jerome was reading near the window. Mrs. Butler was reciting her prayers, and the two girls were conversing together, when the door opened, and an unexpected visitor entered the room. It was Atherton. Uttering a cry of delight, Constance sprang to her feet, and was instantly folded to his breast.

Before he could answer any questions, Monica rushed up to him, and said:

"Oh! relieve my anxiety. Is Jemmy safe?"

"Safe and well," replied Atherton. "He is in Manchester with the regiment, but Colonel Townley would not allow him to accompany me."

"What am I to understand by all this?" cried Constance.

"All chance of our gaining London is over," replied Atherton. "The prince has retreated from Derby, and is now returning to Scotland."

"Without a battle?" cried Constance.

"Ay, without a battle," he replied, sadly.

"I can scarcely believe what I hear," cried Monica. "I would rather a sanguinary engagement had taken place than this should have happened."

"The prince was forced to retreat," rejoined Atherton. "The Highland chiefs would proceed no further."

"Will Jemmy retire from the regiment?" cried Monica.

"No, he will proceed with it to Carlisle. I shall go there likewise. I have obtained leave from the prince to pay this hasty visit. I must return in the morning. We may yet have to fight a battle, for it is reported that the Duke of Cumberland is in hot pursuit, and Marshal Wade may cut off our retreat."

"I will not say that all is lost," observed Constance. "But it seems to me that the prince has lost all chance of recovering the throne. His army and his friends will be alike discouraged, and the attempt cannot be renewed."

"Such is my own opinion, I confess," replied Atherton. "Nevertheless, I cannot leave him."

He then addressed himself to Mrs. Butler and Father Jerome, who had been looking anxiously towards him, and acquainted them with the cause of his unexpected return. They were both deeply grieved to hear of the prince's retreat.

Tears were shed by all the ladies when they were told of the execution of poor Erick Dickson, and they deplored the fate of the faithful Helen Carnegie. Atherton had a long conversation with Constance, but they could not arrange any plans for the future. At last the hour came for separation

for the night, and it was in a very depressed state of mind that he sought his chamber.

It was a large apartment, panelled with oak, and contained a massive oak bedstead with huge twisted columns, and a large canopy. Though a wood fire blazed on the hearth, and cast a glow on the panels, the appearance of the room was exceedingly gloomy.

"'Tis the best bedroom in the house, and I have therefore prepared it for you," observed old Markland, who had conducted him to the room. "You will easily recognise the portrait over the mantelpiece. I have not removed it, as I have not received orders to do so."

Atherton looked up at the picture indicated by the old butler, and could not repress a shudder as he perceived it was a portrait of his uncle, Sir Richard.

However, he made no remark, and shortly afterwards Markland quitted the room.

Seating himself in an easy-chair by the fire, Atherton began to reflect upon the many strange events that had occurred to him, and he almost began to regret that he had ever joined the unlucky expedition.

While indulging these meditations, he fell into

a sort of doze, and fancied that a figure slowly approached him.

How the person had entered the room he could not tell, for he had not heard the door open, nor any sound of footsteps. The figure seemed to glide towards him, rather than walk, and, as it drew nearer, he recognised the ghastly and cadaverous countenance.

Transfixed with horror, he could neither stir nor speak. For some time the phantom stood there with its melancholy gaze fixed upon him.

At last a lugubrious voice, that sounded as if it came from the grave, reached his ear.

"I have come to warn you," said the phantom. "You have neglected my counsel. Be warned now, or you will lose all!"

For a few moments the phantom continued to gaze earnestly at him, and then disappeared.

At the same time the strange oppression that had benumbed his faculties left him, and he was able to move.

As he rose from his chair, he found that the fire was almost extinct, and that his taper had burnt low.

On consulting his watch, he perceived that it was long past midnight. He could not be quite sure whether he had been dreaming, or had beheld a

vision; but he felt the necessity of rest, and hastily disrobing himself, he sought the couch, and slept soundly till morning.

He was awake when old Markland entered his room, but he said nothing to him about the mysterious occurrence of the night.

Determined to abide by his plans, and fearing his resolution might be shaken, he ordered his horses to be got ready in half an hour. He did not see Constance before his departure, but left kind messages for her, and for Mrs. Butler and Monica, by Markland.

The old butler looked very sad, and when Atherton told him he should soon be back again, he did not seem very hopeful.

A fog hung over the moat as he crossed the drawbridge, followed by his groom. On gaining the park, he cast a look back at the old mansion, and fancying he descried Constance at one of the windows, he waved an adieu to her.

As it was not his intention to return to Manchester, but to rejoin the retreating army at Preston, he forded the Mersey at a spot known to Holden, and avoiding Warrington, rode on through a series of lanes to Newton—proceeding thence to Wigan, where he halted for an hour to refresh his horse and

breakfast, after which he continued his course to Preston.

On arriving there he found the town in a state of great confusion. The Highland army was expected, but it was also thought that Marshal Wade would intercept the retreat.

To the latter rumour Atherton attached very little credence, but put up at an inn to await the arrival of the prince.

XII.

The Retreat from Manchester to Carlisle.

On the evening when Atherton visited Rawcliffe Hall, intelligence was received that the Duke of Cumberland was advancing by forced marches to Manchester, and as it was not the prince's intention to give the duke battle, he prepared for an immediate retreat.

Early on the following morning, therefore, the main body of the army, with Charles at its head, quitted the town, and crossed Salford Bridge on the way to Wigan.

Very different was the departure from the arrival. Those who witnessed it did not attempt to conceal their satisfaction, and but few cheers were given to the prince.

At a later hour the Manchester Regiment commenced its march. Its numbers had again been reduced, several desertions having taken place. Some of the officers went on very reluctantly, and one of them, Captain Fletcher, who had refused to proceed further, was dragged off by a party of soldiers.

Shortly after Colonel Townley's departure an express from the Duke of Cumberland was received by the magistrates, enjoining them to seize all stragglers from the rebel army, and detain them until his arrival. The duke also promised to send on a party of dragoons, but as they had not yet come up, and several regiments had not yet quitted the town, the magistrates did not dare to act.

However, as the rear-guard of the army was passing down Smithy Bank to the bridge, a shot was fired from a garret-window, by which a dragoon was killed, upon which the regiment immediately faced about, and the colonel commanding it was so enraged that he gave orders to fire the town.

In an instant all was confusion and dismay. The men, who were quite as infuriated as their leader, were preparing to execute the order, when they were pacified by the capture of the author of the outrage, and summary justice having been inflicted upon him, the regiment quitted Manchester, very much to the relief of the inhabitants.

On that night the prince slept at Wigan; on the following day, he marched with his whole forces to Preston, and here Atherton joined him.

Next day, Charles pursued his march to Lancaster, where he remained for a couple of days to

recruit his men before entering upon the fells of Westmoreland.

After quitting Lancaster, the army moved on in two divisions, one of which rested at Burton, and the other at Kirkby Lonsdale, but they joined again at Kendal, and then continued their march over Shap Fells. The weather was exceedingly unpropitious, and the fine views from the hills were totally obscured by mist.

The prince's deportment seemed entirely changed. He had quite lost the spirit and ardour that characterised him on the onward march, and he seemed perpetually to regret that he had turned back. He thought he had thrown away his chance, and should never recover it.

One day he unburdened his breast to Captain Legh, for whom he had conceived a great regard, and said:

"I ought to have gone on at all hazards. The army would not have abandoned me—even if their leaders had turned back. By this time I should have been master of London—or nothing."

In vain Atherton tried to cheer him. For a few minutes, he roused himself, but speedily relapsed into the same state of dejection.

Heretofore, as we have stated, the prince had marched on foot at the head of one column of the

army, but he now left the command of this division to the Duke of Perth, and rode in the rear, attended by the Marquis d'Eguilles, Sir Thomas Sheridan, Secretary Murray, and Captain Legh.

Lord George Gordon commanded the rear-guard, and was more than a day's march behind the van —great fears being entertained lest the retreating army should be overtaken by the Duke of Cumberland, who was in full pursuit. At length, these apprehensions were realised.

The duke came up with the rear-guard at Clifton, near Penrith, and immediately attacked it, but was most vigorously and successfully repulsed by Lord George; and little doubt can be entertained that if Charles, who was at Penrith, had sent reinforcements, the duke would have been defeated, and perhaps might have been taken prisoner.

Be this as it may, the pursuit was checked, and Charles reached Carlisle without further interruption.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

BOOK IV.

CARLISLE.

I.

Colonel Townley appointed Commandant of the Carlisle Garrison.

On the prince's march south, three companies of Highlanders had been left at Carlisle under the command of Colonel Hamilton, but it was now proposed to strengthen the garrison by the addition of the Manchester Regiment, in case the town should be besieged by the Duke of Cumberland.

To this plan Colonel Townley raised no objection, as his men were disinclined to proceed further, and he doubted whether they could be induced to cross the Border. He was therefore appointed commander of the town garrison, while Colonel Hamilton retained the governorship of the citadel.

The Scottish army did not remain more than a day in Carlisle, and none of the men wished to be left behind.

On the contrary, it was sorely against their inclination that the three companies of the Duke of Perth's regiment remained with Colonel Hamilton.

On the morning of the prince's departure from Carlisle, the Manchester Regiment, now reduced to

a hundred and twenty men, was drawn up on the esplanade of the old castle. With it was Colonel Townley, now commandant of the garrison. On the glacis, also, were ranged the three companies of Highlanders, who were to be left with Colonel Hamilton.

Already the greater portion of the Scottish army had quitted the town, but Charles remained behind to bid adieu to his devoted adherents. Apparently he was much moved as he thus addressed the officers and men of the Manchester Regiment:

"I am loth to leave you here, but since it is your wish not to cross the Border, I do not urge you to accompany me to Scotland." Then addressing the Highland companies, he added: "Scotsmen, you must remain here for a short time longer. Should the town be besieged, you need have no fear. The castle can hold out for a month, and long before that time I will come to your assistance with a strong force."

This address was received with loud cheers, both by Englishmen and Scots.

Colonel Townley then stepped forward and said:

"Your royal highness may rely upon it that we will hold the place till your return. We will never surrender."

"I will answer for my men," added Colonel

Hamilton. The Duke of Cumberland and Marshal Wade shall batter the castle about our ears before we will give it up.

"I am quite satisfied with this assurance," rejoined the prince. Then turning to Captain Legh, he said to him: "Will you remain, or accompany me to Scotland?"

"Since your royal highness allows me the choice, I will remain with the regiment," replied Atherton. "I think I can best serve you here."

Charles looked hard at him, but did not attempt to dissuade him from his purpose.

"I leave you in a perilous post," he said; "but I am well aware of your bravery. I hope we shall soon meet again. Adieu!"

He then mounted his steed, and waving his hand to the two colonels, rode off.

II.

Atherton taken Prisoner.

SURROUNDED by walls built in the time of Henry the Eighth, Carlisle, at the period of our history, boasted a fortress that had successfully resisted many an attack made upon it by the Scots.

Situated on an eminence, and partly surrounded by a broad, deep moat, fed by the river Eden, the citadel, strongly garrisoned and well provided with guns and ammunition, would seem to be almost impregnable. At the foot of the western walls flowed the river Caldew, while the castle overlooked the beautiful river Eden.

On the summit of the keep floated the prince's standard, and from this lofty station remarkably fine views could be obtained. On one side could be noted the junction of the Caldew and the Eden that takes place below the castle, and adds to the strength of its position. The course of the Eden could likewise be traced as it flowed through fertile meadows to pour its waters, augmented by those of the Caldew, into the Solway Frith.

From the same point of observation could like-

wise be descried the borders of Dumfries with the Cheviot Hills on the right, while on the other side the view extended to the stern grey hills of Northumberland. Looking south, the eye ranged over a sweeping tract in the direction of Penrith. Of course the keep looked down upon the ancient cathedral which closely adjoined the castle, and upon the town with its old gates and bulwarks.

Though the walls had become dilapidated, and were of no great strength, yet from its position and from its castle, it would seem that Carlisle was able to stand a lengthened siege, and such was the opinion of Colonel Townley, who considered it tenable against any force that could be brought against it by the Duke of Cumberland.

One important matter, however, could not be overlooked. The inhabitants were hostile, and were only controlled by the garrison. In Carlisle, as in all Border towns, there was an hereditary dislike of the Scots, and this feeling had been heightened by the recent events.

Immediately after the prince's departure, Colonel Townley examined the walls, and caused certain repairs to be made. Guns were mounted by his direction, and chevaux de frise fixed at all the gates and entrances.

A house from which the prince's army had been

fired upon was likewise burnt, to intimidate the inhabitants; and notice was given that any violation of the commandant's orders would be severely punished. A sallying party was sent out under the command of Captain Legh to procure forage and provisions, and returned well supplied.

Amongst the most active and efficient of the officers was Tom Syddall, who had now been raised to the post of adjutant, and rendered the colonel great service. As the number of men ran short, Parson Coppock, whose military ardour equalled his religious zeal, abandoned his gown and cassock, and putting on military accoutrements, acted as quarter-master to the regiment.

The greatest zeal and activity were displayed both by the officers and men of the corps, and Colonel Townley seemed almost ubiquitous.

Colonel Hamilton lacked the spirit and energy displayed by the commandant of the town, and was content to remain quietly shut up within the walls of the castle, leaving the more arduous duties to Townley, who discharged them, as we have shown, most efficiently. Moreover, though he kept the opinion to himself, Colonel Hamilton felt that the garrison would be compelled to capitulate, unless it should be reinforced.

By the end of the third day all possible prepara-

tions for the siege had been made by Townley, and he now deemed himself secure.

On the following day Captain Legh was sent with a message to the governor, and found the castle in a good state of defence. The court-yard was full of Highland soldiers; a few cannon were planted on the battlements, and sentinels were pacing to and fro on the walls.

Colonel Hamilton was on the esplanade at the time, conversing with Captain Abernethy and some other Scottish officers, and Atherton waited till he was disengaged to deliver his message to him; but before the governor could send a reply, a small party of horse, with an officer at their head, could be seen approaching the city from the Penrith road.

Evidently they were English dragoons. After reconnoitring for a few moments, Colonel Hamilton gave his glass to Atherton, who thought they must be coming to summon the city to surrender.

"No doubt of it," replied the governor. "I wonder what Colonel Townley's answer will be?"

"A scornful refusal," rejoined Captain Legh, surprised.

"That is all very well now," remarked the governor, shrugging his shoulders; "but we shall have to capitulate in the end.".

"Does your excellency really think so?"

"I do," replied Hamilton.

The answer returned by Colonel Townley was such as Atherton had anticipated. He positively refused to surrender the city, and declared he would hold it to the last extremity.

On the following day the Duke of Cumberland appeared before the town with his whole army, and immediately began to invest it on all sides. He continued his siege operations for nearly a week, during which a constant fire was kept up from the walls and from the larger guns of the castle, and frequent sallies were made by the garrison. One of these, headed by Captain Legh, was attended with some little success. He drove the enemy from their trenches, and nearly captured the Duke of Richmond.

Hitherto, the besieged party had sustained very little damage, and had only lost a few men. The duke had not indeed opened fire upon them, because he had not received some artillery which he expected from Whitehaven.

Colonel Townley, therefore, continued in high spirits, and even Colonel Hamilton acquired greater confidence. One morning, however, they were startled by perceiving a six-gun battery, which had been erected during the night. Colonel Townley

did not lose courage even at this sight; but the governor was seriously alarmed.

"We shall be compelled to submit," he said; "and must make the best terms we can."

"Submit! never!" cried Townley. "We had better die by the sword than fall into the hands of those cursed Hanoverians. The duke will show us no mercy. Oh that we could but get possession of those guns!"

"Give me twenty well-mounted men and a dozen led horses, and I will bring off a couple of the guns," cried Atherton.

"The attempt were madness," cried Colonel Townley.

"Madness or not, I am ready to make it," rejoined Legh.

Half an hour afterwards the north gate, which was nearest the battery, was suddenly thrown open, and Captain Legh, mounted on a strong horse, and followed by twenty well-mounted men, half of whom had spare horses furnished with stout pieces of rope, dashed at a headlong pace towards the battery. The attack was so sudden and unexpected that the enemy was quite taken by surprise. Only an officer of artillery and half a dozen artillerymen were near the battery at the time, and before they could fly to their guns, Captain Legh and his party were

upon them, and drove them off. A desperate effort was made to carry off two of the guns, but it was found impossible to move the heavy carriages.

The Duke of Cumberland, who was at a short distance with his aide-de-camp, Colonel Conway, planning and directing the operations, witnessed the attack, and instantly ordered Conway with a troop of horse to seize the daring assailants.

But the latter dashed off as hard as they could to the gate, and gained it just in time. All got in safely with the exception of their leader, who was captured by Colonel Conway and led back to the duke.

III.

The Duke of Cumberland.

WILLIAM, Duke of Cumberland, second surviving son of the reigning sovereign, was at this time a handsome young man of twenty-four.

Strongly built, but well proportioned, he had bluff and rather coarse but striking features. Young as he was, the duke had gained considerable military experience. He had fought with his father, George the Second, at the battle of Dettingen, in 1743, and in May, 1745, he engaged Marshal Saxe at Fontenoy, and sustained a most crushing defeat —highly prejudicial to English renown.

Though thus defeated by the superior military skill of Marshal Saxe, the duke displayed so much gallantry and personal courage during the action, that he did not lose his popularity in England, but was very well received on his return; and on the outbreak of the rebellion in the same year, followed by the defeat of General Cope at Preston Pans, the attack on Edinburgh, and the march of the young Chevalier at the head of the Highland army into

England, he assumed the command of the royal forces, and prepared to drive the rebels out of the kingdom. But instead of doing this, to the general surprise, he allowed the Scots to continue their advance as far as Derby, and it will always remain doubtful whether, if the prince had marched on to London, his daring attempt would not have been crowned by success. A contemporary historian unquestionably thought so, and emphatically declares: "Had the adventurer proceeded in his career with the expedition which he had hitherto used, he might have made himself master of the metropolis, where he would have been certainly joined by a considerable number of his well-wishers, who waited impatiently for his approach." * But when the prince commenced his retreat the duke immediately started in pursuit, though he made no real efforts to overtake him, and as we have seen he was repulsed by Lord George Gordon at Clifton, near Penrith. Again, instead of pursuing the rebels into Scotland, he sat down to besiege Carlisle.

The duke was surrounded by his staff, when Captain Legh was brought before him by Colonel Conway.

"Who is this rash fellow, who seems anxious to throw away his life?" demanded the duke.

* Smollett's History of England. Reign of George the Second.

"I thought I knew him, for his features seem strangely familiar to me," replied Colonel Conway. "But I must be mistaken. He gives his name as Atherton Legh, captain of the Manchester Regiment."

"Atherton Legh! ha!" cried the duke. Then fixing a stern look upon the young man, he said:

"You had better have remained faithful to the Government, sir. Now you will die as a traitor and a rebel."

"I am prepared to meet my fate, whatever it may be," replied Atherton, firmly.

"I might order you for instant execution," pursued the duke. "But you shall have a fair trial with the rest of the garrison. It must surrender to-morrow."

"Your royal highness is mistaken—the garrison can hold out for a week."

"'Tis you who are mistaken, Captain Legh," rejoined the duke, haughtily. "I have just received a letter from Colonel Hamilton, offering me terms of submission."

"I am indeed surprised to hear it," said Atherton. "Your royal highness may credit me when I affirm that the citadel is in a very good state of defence, has plenty of arms and ammunition, and ought to hold out for a month."

"That may be," rejoined the duke. "But I tell you I have received a letter from the governor, asking for terms. However, I will only accept an unconditional surrender."

"Colonel Townley, the commander of the city garrison, will hold out to the last," said Atherton.

"Colonel Townley is a brave man, and may die sword in hand; but hold the town he cannot. His regiment does not number a hundred men. You see I am well informed, Captain Legh. To-morrow you will see your colonel again."

"I shall be glad to see him again—but not here," replied Atherton.

"Take the prisoner hence," said the duke to Colonel Conway. "Let him be well treated—but carefully watched."

Colonel Conway bowed, and Atherton was removed by the guard.

IV.

Surrender of Carlisle to the Duke of Cumberland.

SHORTLY after the incident just related, fire was opened from the battery, but not much damage was done; it being the duke's intention to alarm the garrison, rather than injure the town. A few shots were directed against the castle, and struck the massive walls of the keep. The fire was answered by the besieged—but without any effect.

At this juncture it was with great difficulty that the inhabitants could be kept in check, and, with the small force at his command, it became evident to Colonel Townley that he must surrender.

Calling his officers together, he thus addressed them:

"Our position is most critical. Outside the walls we are completely blockaded, and inside the inhabitants are against us. One means of escape has occurred to me; but it is so hazardous, that it ought scarcely to be adopted. A sortie might be made by a small party of horse, and these might succeed in cutting their way through the enemy. If a couple of barges could be found, the rest might manage to float down the Eden."

"That plan has occurred to me, colonel," said Captain Dawson. "But it is impracticable, since all the barges and boats have been destroyed. Possibly a few men might escape by swimming down the river—but in no other way."

"No," said Colonel Townley; "we are so completely environed that escape is impossible, unless we could cut our way through the enemy, and this cannot be done, since there are no horses for the men. I will never abandon my gallant regiment. Since Colonel Hamilton has resolved to surrender, it is impossible for me to hold out longer—though I would a thousand times rather die with arms in my hand than submit to the mercy of the Duke of Cumberland."

Several plans were then proposed, but were rejected, as none seemed feasible; and at last a muster was made of the regiment, and Colonel Townley's resolution being communicated to the men, was received by them with the greatest sorrow.

Later on in the day, Townley repaired to the citadel, where he had a conference with the governor, and endeavoured to induce him to change his purpose, but in vain.

On the following morning the besieged town of Carlisle presented a singular spectacle. The inhabitants, who had hitherto been kept in awe by the

garrison, assembled in the streets, and did not attempt to hide their exultation; while the Highlanders in the castle, and the officers and men of the Manchester Regiment, looked deeply dejected, and stood listlessly at their posts. The cause of all these mingled feelings of ill-concealed satisfaction on one side, and deep dejection on the other, was, that the garrison had declared its intention to surrender, by hanging out the white flag. The men still stood to their arms—the engineers and artillerymen remained upon the walls—the gates of the city were still guarded—but not a gun had been fired. All was terrible expectation.

Colonel Hamilton, Captain Abernethy, Colonel Townley, and some of the officers of the Manchester Regiment, were assembled on the esplanade of the castle, when Captain Vere, an officer of the English army, attended by an orderly, rode towards them. As the bearer of a despatch for the governor, he had been allowed to enter the city.

Dismounting, Captain Vere marched up to the governor, and, with a formal salute, delivered a missive to him, saying, "This from his royal highness."

The governor took the letter, and, walking aside with Colonel Townley, read as follows:

"'All the terms his royal highness will or can grant to the rebel garrison of Carlisle are, that they

shall not be put to the sword, but be reserved for the king's pleasure.'"

"The king's pleasure!" exclaimed Colonel Townley. "We have nothing but death to expect from the usurper. But go on."

"'If they consent to these conditions, the governor and the principal officers are to deliver themselves up immediately; and the castle, citadel, and all the gates of the town are to be taken possession of forthwith by the king's troops.'"

"I cannot make up my mind to this," cried Townley.

"Unfortunately there is no help for it," observed Colonel Hamilton. "But hear what follows: 'All the small arms are to be lodged in the town guard-room, and the rest of the garrison are to retire to the cathedral, where a guard is to be placed over them. No damage is to be done to the artillery, arms, or ammunition.' That is all."

"And enough too," rejoined Townley. "The conditions are sufficiently hard and humiliating."

"Gentlemen," said the governor, addressing the officers, "'tis proper you should hear the terms offered by the duke."

And he proceeded to read the letter to them.

Murmurs arose when he had done, and a voice —it was that of Adjutant Syddall—called out:

"Reject them!"

"Impossible," exclaimed Hamilton.

Thinking he had been kept waiting long enough, Captain Vere then stepped forward and inquired, "What answer shall I take to his royal highness?"

Colonel Townley and his officers were all eagerness to send a refusal; but the governor cried out, "Tell the duke that his terms are accepted."

"In that case, gentlemen," said Captain Vere, "you will all prepare to deliver yourselves up. His royal highness will at once take possession of the town.

With this, he mounted his horse, and rode off, attended by his orderly.

About an hour afterwards, the gates being thrown open, Brigadier Bligh entered the town with a troop of horse, and rode to the market-place, where, in front of the guard-room, he found Colonel Hamilton, Captain Abernethy, Colonel Townley, and the officers of the Manchester Regiment, a French officer, and half a dozen Irish officers.

They all yielded themselves up as prisoners, and the brigadier desired them to enter the guard-room, and when they had complied with the order, placed a guard at the door.

The Highlanders, the non-commissioned officers and privates of the Manchester Regiment, with a

few French and Irish soldiers, who were drawn up in the market-place, then piled their arms, and retired to the cathedral, where a strong guard was set over them.

Crowded with these prisoners, the interior of the sacred building presented a very singular picture. Most of the men looked sullen and angry, and their rage was increased when the sound of martial music proclaimed the entrance of the Duke of Cumberland with his whole army into the town.

Attended by General Hawley, Colonel Conway, Colonel York, and a large staff of officers, the duke was received with acclamations by the townspeople who had come forth to meet him. Riding on to the citadel, he dismounted with his staff, and, entering a large room recently occupied by the governor, ordered the prisoners to be brought before him. After charging them with rebellion and treason, he told them they would be sent under a strong guard to London, there to take their trial.

When he had finished, Colonel Townley stepped forward, and said:

"I claim to be treated as a prisoner of war. For sixteen years I have been in the service of the King of France, and I now hold a commission from his majesty, which I can lay before your royal highness if you will deign to look at it."

"But you have received another commission from the son of the Pretender, and have acted as colonel of the rebel regiment raised by yourself in Manchester," interposed General Hawley. "Your plea is therefore inadmissible."

"I have as much right to the cartel as any French officer taken by his royal highness at the battle of Fontenoy," rejoined Townley.

"As a liege subject of his majesty, you are not justified in serving a prince at war with him," said the Duke of Cumberland, sternly. "I cannot entertain your plea. You will be tried for rebellion and treason with the rest of the prisoners."

Seeing it would be useless to urge anything further, Colonel Townley stepped back.

The only person allowed the cartel was the French officer.

The prisoners were then removed, and ordered to be kept in strict confinement in the castle until they could be conveyed to London.

Some deserters from the king's army were then brought before the duke, who ordered them to be hanged, and the sentence was forthwith carried out on a piece of ground at the back of the castle.

The prisoners passed the night in strict confinement in the castle, their gloom being heightened by

the sound of the rejoicings that took place in the town at the Duke of Cumberland's success.

On the following morning at an early hour, three large waggons, each having a team of strong horses, were drawn up near the gates of the castle. These were destined to convey the prisoners to London. The foremost waggon was assigned to Colonel Townley, Captain Dawson, Captain Deacon, and Captain Legh. The rest of the officers of the Manchester Regiment were similarly bestowed. A strong mounted guard accompanied the conveyances, having orders to shoot any prisoner who might attempt to escape.

As the waggons moved slowly through the streets towards the south gate, groans and execrations arose from the spectators, and missiles were hurled at the prisoners, who no doubt would have fared ill if they had not been protected.

The Duke of Cumberland remained for two days longer at Carlisle, when having received a despatch from the king enjoining his immediate return, as an invasion from France was apprehended, he posted back to London, taking Colonel Conway with him, and leaving the command of the army to General Hawley, who started in pursuit of Prince Charles.

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

BOOK V.

JEMMY DAWSON.

I.

The Escape at Wigan.

THE prisoners were treated very considerately on their journey to London. Whenever the waggons stopped at an inn, their occupants were allowed to alight and order what they pleased, and as they had plenty of money, they were served with the best the house could afford. At night, they sometimes slept in the waggons, sometimes at an inn, if sufficient accommodation could be found. In the latter case, of course, a guard was placed at the doors.

Passed in this way, the journey might not have been disagreeable, if it had not been for the indignities to which they were occasionally exposed. None of the officers felt any great uneasiness as to their fate. Despite what the Duke of Cumberland had said to Colonel Townley, they were led to expect that they would be treated as prisoners of war, and regularly exchanged.

Entertaining this conviction, they managed to keep up their spirits, and some of them led a very jovial life.

A great change, however, had taken place in

Colonel Townley's deportment. He had become extremely reserved, and associated only with Captain Deacon, Captain Dawson, and Atherton. The two latter would have been far more cheerful if they had obtained any tidings of those to whom they were tenderly attached.

On the third day after leaving Carlisle, the prisoners arrived at Lancaster, and on the following day they were taken to Preston. Here the feeling of the inhabitants was so strong against them that they had to be protected by the guard.

At Wigan, where the next halt was made for the night, Atherton remarked that John Holgate, the host of the Bear's Paw, the inn at which they stopped, looked very hard at him. He thought he knew the man's face, and subsequently remembered him as a tradesman in Manchester.

In the course of the evening Holgate found an opportunity of speaking to him privately, and told him not to go to bed, but to leave his window slightly open—as something might happen. Having given him these directions, Holgate hastily left him.

On entering his room, which was at the back of the house, Atherton found it looked into the inn-yard, where the waggons were drawn up, and as some men were going in and out of the stables with lanterns, he perceived that several of the

troopers were preparing to take their night's rest in the waggons.

Immediately beneath the window, which was at some height from the ground, a sentinel was posted.

Having made the observations, Atherton withdrew, leaving the window slightly open as he had been enjoined, and put out the light.

In about an hour all became quiet in the yard —the troopers had got into the waggons, and no doubt were fast asleep, but he could hear the measured tread of the sentinel as he paced to and fro.

Another hour elapsed, and the sentinel being still at his post, Atherton began to fear that Holgate might fail in his design. But his hopes revived when the footsteps could no longer be heard, and softly approaching the window he looked out.

The sentinel was gone. But in his place stood another person, whom Atherton had no doubt was the friendly landlord.

Having intimated his presence by a slight signal, Holgate retreated, and Atherton instantly prepared to join him. Emerging from the window as noiselessly as he could, he let himself drop to the ground, and achieved the feat so cleverly, that he was only heard by Holgate, who immediately took him to

the back of the yard, where they clambered over a low wall, and gained a narrow lane, along which they hastened.

"I think you are now safe," said Holgate. "At any rate, you will be so when we reach our destination. I have brought you this way because it would have been impossible to elude the vigilance of the sentinel placed in front of the house. I have given the man who was stationed in the yard a pot of ale, and he has retired to the stable to drink it."

"You have proved yourself a good friend to me, Holgate," said Atherton; "but I fear you are running great risk on my account."

"I don't mind that," replied the other. "The moment I saw you, I determined to liberate you. I dare say you've forgotten the circumstance, but I haven't. You saved me from being drowned in the Irwell—now we're quits. I'm going to take you to the old Manor House in Bishopsgate-street. It belongs to Captain Hulton, who is in the king's army, but he is away, and my aunt, Mrs. Scholes, who is his housekeeper, has charge of the house. She is a staunch Jacobite. I have seen her and told her all about you. You may trust her perfectly."

Proceeding with the utmost caution, they soon

came to Bishopsgate-street, in which the old Manor House was situated.

Taking his companion to the back of the premises, Holgate tapped at a door, which was immediately opened by a very respectable-looking middle-aged woman, who curtsied to Atherton as she admitted him. Holgate did not enter the house, but with a hasty "good-night," departed, and the door was closed and bolted.

Mrs. Scholes then took Atherton to the kitchen, and explained that she meant to put him in the "secret room" in case the house should be searched.

"You will be indifferently lodged, sir," she said; "but you will be safe, and that's the chief thing."

Atherton entirely concurred with her, and without wasting any further time in talk, she led him up a back staircase to a bedroom, from which there was a secret entrance through a closet, to a small inner chamber. The latter was destined for Atherton, and scantily furnished as it was, he was very well content with it, and slept soundly in the little couch prepared for him.

Next morning, when the prisoners were mustered the greatest consternation was caused by the discovery that Captain Legh was missing. It was quite clear that he had got out of the window, and it was equally clear that the sentinel must have

neglected his duty, or the prisoner could not have escaped; but no suspicion attached to the landlord.

Of course the departure of the waggons was delayed, and strict search was made for the fugitive throughout the town. A proclamation was likewise issued, announcing that any one harbouring him would be liable to severe penalties. But the notice had no effect.

In consequence, of some information received by the officer in command of the escort that two persons had been seen to enter the Manor House in Bishopsgate-street late at night, the house was strictly searched, but the secret chamber was not discovered, nor was anything found to indicate that the fugitive was concealed there.

II.

The Meeting at Warrington.

At Warrington, where the prisoners were conveyed next day, a meeting took place between Jemmy and Monica, who had come over from Rawcliffe Hall to see her unfortunate lover. She was accompanied by Father Jerome.

Jemmy was alone in a little parlour of the inn at which the waggons had stopped, when Monica was admitted by the guard, who immediately withdrew, and left them together.

Springing forward, Jemmy clasped her to his heart.

So overpowered were they both, that for some minutes they could not give utterance to their feelings, but gazed at each other through eyes streaming with tears.

"Alas! alas!" cried Monica, at length. "Is it come to this? Do I find my dearest Jemmy a prisoner?"

"A prisoner of war," he replied, in as cheerful a tone as he could assume. "I am sure to be exchanged. We shall be separated for a time, but

shall meet again in another country. You imagine we shall all be put to death, but believe me the Elector of Hanover has no such intention. He dares not execute us."

"Hush! Jemmy—not so loud. I have been wretched ever since the retreat from Derby took place, for I foresaw what it would come to! I have never ceased to reproach myself with being the cause of your destruction."

"You have nothing to reproach yourself with, dearest girl," he rejoined, tenderly. "'Tis a pity the prince did not march to London! 'Tis a still greater pity the regiment was left at Carlisle."

"Yes, you have been sacrificed, Jemmy—cruelly sacrificed. I shall never think otherwise."

"Such imputations, I am aware, are laid to the prince's charge, but he doesn't deserve them—indeed he doesn't. He is the soul of honour. No one believed the Duke of Cumberland would stop to besiege the town; and those best informed thought it could hold out for a month. However, fortune has declared against us. But I won't allow myself to be cast down." Then lowering his tone, he added, "You know that Atherton has escaped?"

"Yes, I know it," she rejoined. "And so does Constance. Oh, that you had been with him, Jemmy!"

"I shall find means to follow—never doubt it," he rejoined. "But it won't do to make the attempt just yet, for we shall be much more strictly watched than before. But I have a plan, which I mean to put in practice when an opportunity offers, and I hope it will succeed."

"Can I aid you, Jemmy?" she asked, anxiously.

"No," he replied. "But don't be surprised if you see me some night at Rawcliffe Hall."

"Now, indeed, you give me fresh spirits," she cried. "Heaven grant I may see you soon! But there may be danger in your coming to Rawcliffe, and you mustn't run any needless risk on my account."

"The first use I shall make of my liberty will be to fly to you, dearest girl. Of that you may be quite sure. But we are talking only of ourselves. You have scarcely mentioned Constance or your mother. How are they both?"

"They have been full of anxiety, as you may easily imagine. But Constance has somewhat revived since she heard of Atherton's escape, and the tidings I shall be able to give her of you will make her feel more easy. As to my mother, whatever she may suffer—and I am sure she suffers much—she is perfectly resigned. Father Jerome is without. Will you see him?"

"No. I will devote each moment to you. Ah! we are interrupted!" he exclaimed, as the guard came in to say that the time allowed them had expired.

Again they were locked in each other's arms, and when they were forced to separate it seemed as if their hearts were torn asunder. Even the guard was moved by their distress.

Nevertheless, Monica returned to Rawcliffe Hall in far better spirits than she had quitted it in the morning. She had now some hopes that her lover would escape.

Shortly after her departure, Jemmy was obliged to take his place in the waggon, and for some time felt very wretched; but at length he consoled himself by thinking that his separation from the object of his affections would not be long.

The waggons proceeded so slowly on their journey to London, that before they reached Dunstable news was received of the defeat of General Hawley, at Falkirk, by the prince. These tidings caused great alarm throughout the country, as the opinion generally prevailed that after the siege of Carlisle the rebellion had been completely suppressed.

Though the prisoners rejoiced at the prince's success, they felt that their own peril was considerably increased by the event, and that in all pro-

bability the severest measures would now be adopted against them.

Hitherto, such strict watch had been kept that Jemmy Dawson had found no means of executing his plan of escape.

III.

Atherton takes Refuge at Rawcliffe Hall.

On the third day after Atherton's escape at Wigan, as Constance and Monica, who had been tempted forth by the fineness of the weather, were walking in the park, a young man, in a plain country dress that gave him the appearance of a farmer, made his way towards them.

From the first moment when they beheld this personage their suspicions were excited, but as he drew nearer they perceived it was Atherton. Constance would have hurried forward to meet him, but feeling the necessity of caution she restrained herself. Presently, he came up, and thinking he might be noticed by some observer, he adopted a very respectful and distant manner, consistent with the character he had assumed, and took off his hat while addressing them.

"Of course you have heard of my escape," he said. "I did not attempt to communicate with you, for I had no one whom I could trust to convey a message, and I did not dare to write lest my letter should fall into wrong hands. For two days I was

concealed in the old Manor House at Wigan, and most carefully attended to by the house-keeper, who provided for all my wants. I had some difficulty in getting away, for the house was watched, but on the second night I ventured out, and soon got clear of the town. Before I left, Mrs. Scholes procured me this disguise, without which I should infallibly have been captured, for my uniform must have betrayed me. Even thus attired, I have had more than one narrow escape. If I can only get into the house unobserved I shall be perfectly safe."

"You must wait till night and all shall be ready for you," rejoined Constance. "As soon as it grows dark Markland shall come out into the park."

"He will find me near this spot," replied Atherton.

"But what will you do in the interim?" asked Constance, anxiously.

"Give yourself no concern about me," he rejoined. "You may be sure I will not expose myself to any needless risk. Adieu!"

With a rustic bow he then moved off, and the two damsels returned to the hall.

Constance's first business was to summon Markland and tell him what had occurred.

The old butler did not manifest much surprise

at the intelligence, for when he had first heard of Atherton's escape, he felt certain the young gentleman would seek refuge at the hall, and he had already made some quiet preparations for his concealment. He therefore expressed the utmost readiness to carry out his young mistress's instructions, and declared that he could easily manage matters so that none of the servants should be aware that Captain Legh was hidden in the house.

"Even if he should remain here for a month," he said, "with common caution I will engage he shall not be discovered."

"I am very glad to hear you speak so confidently, Markland," she rejoined; "for I feared it would be impossible to conceal him for more than a day or two."

Having made all needful arrangements, Markland stole out quietly as soon as it became dark, and found Atherton at the spot indicated.

"You are so well disguised, sir," he said, "that if I hadn't been prepared I should certainly not have known you. But don't let us waste time in talking here. I must get you into the house."

The night being very dark their approach to the hall could not be perceived. On reaching the drawbridge Markland told his companion to slip past while he went into the gate-house to speak to the

porter, and by observing these instructions, Atherton gained the court-yard unperceived.

The butler then gave orders that the drawbridge should be raised, and while the porter was thus employed, he opened the postern and admitted Captain Legh into the house. Having first satisfied himself that no one was in the way, Markland then led the young man along a passage to his own room on the ground floor.

All danger was now over. The small room into which Atherton had been ushered looked exceedingly snug and comfortable. Thick curtains drawn over the narrow window facing the moat, prevented any inquisitive eye from peering into the chamber. A bright fire burnt on the hearth, and near it stood a table on which a cold pasty was placed with a bottle of claret.

"I have prepared a little supper for you, sir," said Markland. "Pray sit down to it. I'll take care you sha'n't be disturbed. You will please to excuse me. I have some other matters to attend to."

He then went out, taking the precaution to lock the door, and Atherton partook of the first quiet meal he had enjoyed for some time.

Old Markland did not return for nearly three hours, and when he unlocked the door, he found Atherton fast asleep in the chair. Great havoc had

been made with the pasty, and the flask of claret was nearly emptied.

"I have got a bed ready for you, sir," he said. "It isn't quite so comfortable as I could wish, but you will make allowances."

"No need of apologies, Markland. I could sleep very well in this chair."

"That's just what I mean to do myself, sir," replied the butler, laughing.

With this, he took Captain Legh up a back staircase to a disused suite of apartments, in one of which a bed had been prepared, while a wood fire blazing on the hearth gave a cheerful air to the otherwise gloomy-looking room.

"I have had this room got ready as if for myself, sir," observed Markland; "but as I have just told you, I mean to sleep in a chair below stairs. I wish you a good night, sir. I'll come to you in the morning."

So saying, he quitted the room, and Atherton shortly afterwards sought his couch, and slept very soundly.

Next morning, the old butler visited him before he had begun to dress, and opening the drawers of a wardrobe that stood in the room, took out two or three handsome suits of clothes—somewhat old-fashioned, inasmuch as they belonged to the period

of George the First, but still attire that could be worn.

"These habiliments belonged to your father, Sir Oswald," said Markland; "and as you are about his size, I am sure they will fit you."

"But are they not out of fashion, Markland?" cried Atherton. "People will stare at me if I appear in a costume of five-and-twenty years ago."

"Well, perhaps they might," rejoined the butler; "but there can be no objection to this dark riding-dress."

"No, that will do very well," said Atherton, in an approving tone, after he had examined it.

"You will find plenty of linen in this drawer—laced shirts, solitaires, cravats, silk stockings," continued the butler; "and in that cupboard there are three or four pairs of jack-boots, with as many cocked-hats."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Atherton. "You have quite set me up, Markland. But now leave me for a short time, that I may try the effect of this riding-dress."

The butler then withdrew, but returned in about half an hour with a pot of chocolate and some slices of toast on a tray.

By this time Atherton was fully attired, and everything fitted him—even to the boots, which he had got out of the cupboard.

"Why, I declare, you are the very image of your father!" exclaimed Markland, as he gazed at him in astonishment. "If I had not known who you are, I should have thought Sir Oswald had come to life again. If any of the old servants should see you, you will certainly be taken for a ghost."

"That's exactly what I should desire," replied Atherton; "and should it be necessary, I shall endeavour to keep up the character. However, I don't mean to qualify myself for the part by eating nothing, so pour me out a cup of chocolate."

The butler obeyed, and Atherton sat down, and made a very good breakfast.

Before he had quite finished his repast, the butler left him, and did not reappear.

IV.

An Enemy in the House.

Not having anything better to do, Atherton began to wander about the deserted suite of apartments, with which his own chamber communicated by a side door.

As the windows were closed, the rooms looked very dark, and he could see but little, and what he did see, impressed him with a melancholy feeling; but the furthest room in the suite looked lighter and more cheerful than the others, simply because the shutters had been opened.

It was a parlour, but most of the furniture had been removed, and only a few chairs and a table were left.

Atherton sat down, and was ruminating upon his position, when a door behind was softly opened—so very softly that he heard no sound.

But he felt a gentle touch on his shoulder, and, looking up, beheld Constance standing beside him.

When he met her in the park with Monica, he had not noticed any material alteration in her appearance; but now that he gazed into her face, he

was very much struck by the change which a week or two had wrought in her looks.

Dressed in deep mourning, she looked much thinner than heretofore, and the roses had entirely flown from her cheeks; but the extreme paleness of her complexion heightened the lustre of her magnificent black eyes, and contrasted forcibly with her dark locks, while the traces of sadness lent fresh interest to her features.

Not without anxiety did Atherton gaze at her, and, at last, he said:

"You have been ill, Constance?"

"Not very ill," she replied, with a faint smile. "I am better—and shall soon be quite well. My illness has been rather mental than bodily. I have never quite recovered from the terrible shock which I had to undergo—and, besides, I have been very uneasy about you. Now that you are safe I shall soon recover my health and spirits. At one time I feared I should never behold you again, and then I began to droop."

"I thought you possessed great firmness, Constance," he remarked.

"So I fancied, but I found myself unequal to the trial," she rejoined. "I had no one to cheer me. Monica's distress was even greater than my own, and her mother did not offer us much consolation,

for she seemed convinced that both you and Jemmy were doomed to die as traitors."

"Well, your apprehensions are now at an end, so far as I am concerned," said Atherton; "and I see no cause for uneasiness in regard to Jemmy, for he is certain to escape in one way or other. I hope to meet him a month hence in Paris. But I shall not leave England till I learn he is free, as if he fails to escape, I must try to accomplish his deliverance."

"Do not run any further risk," she cried.

"I have promised to help him, and I must keep my word," he rejoined.

"I ought not to attempt to dissuade you, for I love Jemmy dearly, but I love you still better, and I therefore implore you, for my sake—if not for your own—not to expose yourself to further danger. I will now tell you frankly that I could not go through such another week as I have just passed."

"But you must now feel that your apprehensions were groundless; and if I should be placed in any fresh danger, you must take courage from the past."

"Perhaps you will say that I am grown very timorous, and I can scarcely account for my misgivings—but I will not conceal them. I don't think you are quite safe in this house."

"Why not? Old Markland is devoted to me, I

am quite sure, and no one else among the household is aware of my arrival."

"But I am sadly afraid they may discover you."

"You are indeed timorous. Even if I should be discovered, I don't think any of them would be base enough to betray me."

"I have another ground for uneasiness, more serious than this, but I scarcely like to allude to it, because I may be doing an injustice to the person who causes my alarm. I fear you have an enemy in the house."

Atherton looked at her inquiringly, and then said:

"I can only have one enemy—Father Jerome."

She made no answer, but he perceived from her looks that he had guessed aright.

"'Tis unlucky he is established in the house. Why did you bring him here?"

"I could not help it. And he has been most useful to me. But I know he does not like you; and I also know that his nature is malicious and vindictive. I hope he may not find out that you are concealed in the house. I have cautioned Markland, and Monica does not require to be cautioned. Ah! what was that?" she added, listening anxiously. "I thought I heard a noise in the adjoining chamber."

"It may be Markland," said Atherton. "But I will go and see."

With this, he stepped quickly into the next room, the door of which stood ajar.

As we have mentioned, the shutters were closed, and the room was dark, but still, if any listener had been there, he must have been detected. The room, however, seemed quite empty.

Not satisfied with this inspection, Atherton went on through the whole suite of apartments, and with a like result.

"You must have been mistaken," he said on his return to Constance. "I could find no eaves-dropper."

"I am glad to hear it, for I feared that a certain person might be there. But I must now leave you. I hope you will not find your confinement intolerably wearisome. You will be able to get out at night—but during the daytime you must not quit these rooms."

"Come frequently to see me, and the time will pass pleasantly enough," he rejoined.

"I must not come too often or my visits will excite suspicion," she replied. "But I will send you some books by Markland."

"There is a private communication between this part of the house and the library. May I not venture to make use of it?"

"Not without great caution," she rejoined. "Father Jerome is constantly in the library. But I will try to get him away in the evening, and Markland shall bring you word when you can descend with safety."

"Surely some plan might be devised by which Father Jerome could be got rid of for a time?" said Atherton.

"I have thought the matter over, but no such plan occurs to me," replied Constance. "He rarely quits the house, and were I to propose to him to take a journey, or pay a visit, he would immediately suspect I had an object in doing so. But even if he were willing to go, my Aunt Butler I am sure would object."

"Is she not aware that I am in the house?"

"No, Monica and I thought it better not to trust her. She could not keep the secret from Father Jerome."

"Then since the evil cannot be remedied it must be endured," said Atherton.

"That is the right way to view it," rejoined Constance. "Not till the moment of your departure must Father Jerome learn that you have taken refuge here. And now adieu!"

V.

A Point of Faith.

LEFT alone, Atherton endeavoured to reconcile himself to his imprisonment, but with very indifferent success.

How he longed to join the party downstairs—to go forth into the garden or the park—to do anything, in short, rather than remain shut up in those gloomy rooms! But stay there he must!—so he amused himself as well as he could by looking into the cupboards with which the rooms abounded.

In the course of his examination he found some books, and with these he contrived to beguile the time till old Markland made his appearance.

The old butler brought with him a well-filled basket, from which he produced the materials of a very good cold dinner, including a flask of wine; and a cloth being spread upon a small table in the room we have described as less gloomy than the other apartments, the young man sat down to the repast.

"I have had some difficulty in bringing you these provisions, sir," observed Markland. "Father

Jerome has been playing the spy upon me all the morning—hovering about my room, so that I couldn't stir without running against him. Whether he heard anything last night I can't say, but I'm sure he suspects you are hidden in the house."

"What if he does suspect, Markland?" observed Atherton. "Do you think he would betray me? If you believe so, you must have a very bad opinion of him."

"I can tell you one thing, sir, he was far from pleased when he heard of your escape, and wished it had been Captain Dawson instead. I told him I thought you might seek refuge here, and he said he hoped not; adding, 'If you were foolish enough to do so you would certainly be discovered.' I repeated these observations to Miss Rawcliffe, and she agreed with me that they argued an ill-feeling towards you."

"What can I have done to offend him?" exclaimed Atherton.

"I don't know, sir, except that you are heir to the property. But give yourself no uneasiness. I will take care he sha'n't harm you. Don't on any account leave these rooms till you see me again."

"Has Father Jerome access to this part of the house, Markland?"

"No; I keep the door of the gallery constantly

locked; and he is not aware of the secret entrance to the library."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Quite sure, sir. I never heard him allude to it."

"He is frequently in the library, I understand?"

"Yes, he sits there for hours; but he generally keeps in his own room in the evening, and you might then come down with safety. Have you everything you require at present?"

"Everything. You have taken excellent care of me, Markland."

"I am sorry I can't do better. I'll return by-and-by to take away the things."

With this he departed, and Atherton soon made an end of his meal.

Time seemed to pass very slowly, but at length evening arrived, and the butler reappeared.

"You will find Miss Rawcliffe in the library," he said, "and need fear no interruption, for Father Jerome is with Mrs. Butler. I shall be on the watch, and will give timely notice should any danger arise."

Instantly shaking off the gloom that had oppresed him, Atherton set off. The butler accompanied him to the head of the private staircase, but went no further. Though all was buried in

darkness, the young man easily found his way to the secret door, and cautiously stepped into the library.

Lights placed upon the table showed him that Constance was in the room, and so noiselessly had he entered, that she was not aware of his presence till he moved towards her. She then rose from the sofa to meet him, and was clasped to his breast. Need we detail their converse? It was like all lovers' talk—deeply interesting to the parties concerned, but of little interest to any one else. However, we must refer to one part of it. They had been speaking of their prospects of future happiness, when he might be able to procure a pardon from the Government and return to Rawcliffe—or she might join him in France.

"But why should our union be delayed?" he cried. "Why should we not be united before my departure?"

"'Tis too soon after my unhappy father's death," she replied. "I could not show such disrespect to his memory."

"But the marriage would be strictly private, and consequently there could be no indecorum. You can remain here for awhile and then rejoin me. I shall be better able to endure the separation when I feel certain you are mine."

"I am yours already—linked to you as indissolubly as if our hands had been joined at the altar. But the ceremony cannot be performed at present. Our faiths are different. Without a dispensation from a bishop of the Church of Rome, which could not be obtained here, no Romish priest would unite us. But were Father Jerome willing to disobey the canons of the Church, I should have scruples."

"You never alluded to such scruples before."

"I knew not of the prohibition. I dare not break the rules of the Church I belong to."

"But you say that a license can be procured," he cried, eagerly.

"Not here," she rejoined; "and this would be a sufficient reason for the delay, if none other existed. Let us look upon this as a trial to which we must submit, and patiently wait for happier days when all difficulties may be removed."

"You do not love me as much as I thought you did, Constance," he said, in a reproachful tone. "'Tis plain you are under the influence of this malicious and designing priest."

"Do not disquiet yourself," she rejoined, calmly. "Father Jerome has no undue influence over me, and could never change my sentiments towards you. I admit that he is not favourably disposed to-

wards our union, and would prevent it if he could, but he is powerless."

"I shall be miserable if I leave him with you, Constance. He ought to be driven from the house."

"I cannot do that," she rejoined. "But depend upon it he shall never prejudice me against you."

Little more passed between them, for Constance did not dare to prolong the interview.

VI.

A Letter from Beppy Byrom.

ANOTHER day of imprisonment—for such Atherton deemed it. Markland brought him his meals as before, and strove to cheer him, for the young man looked very dull and dispirited.

"I can't remain here much longer, Markland," he said. "Something in the atmosphere of these deserted rooms strangely oppresses me. I seem to be surrounded by beings of another world, who, though invisible to mortal eye, make their presence felt. I know this is mere imagination, and I am ashamed of myself for indulging such idle fancies, but I cannot help it. Tell me, Markland," he added, "are these rooms supposed to be haunted?"

"Since you ask me the question, sir, I must answer it truthfully. They are. It was reported long ago that apparitions had been seen in them; and since nobody liked to occupy the rooms, they were shut up. But you needn't be frightened, sir. The ghosts will do you no harm."

"I am not frightened, Markland. But I confess

I prefer the society of the living to that of the dead. Last night—whether I was sleeping or waking at the time I can't exactly tell—but I thought Sir Richard appeared to me; and this is the second time I have seen him, for he warned me before I went to Carlisle. And now he has warned me again of some approaching danger. The spirit—if spirit it was—had a grieved and angry look, and seemed to reproach me with neglect."

The latter was deeply interested in what was told him, and, after a moment's reflection, said:

"This is very strange. Have you disregarded Sir Richard's dying injunctions? Bethink you, sir!"

"I would not abandon the expedition as he counselled me, and I went on to Carlisle—but since my return I cannot charge myself with any neglect. Ah! one thing occurs to me. I ought to see that certain documents which he left me are safe."

"Where did you place them, sir, may I ask?" said the butler.

"In the ebony cabinet in the library. I have the key."

"Then, no doubt, they are perfectly safe, sir.

But it may be well to satisfy yourself on the point when you go down to the library."

"I will do so. Shall I find Miss Rawcliffe there this evening?"

"You will, sir, at the same hour as last night. She bade me tell you so."

Shortly afterwards, the butler took his departure, and Atherton was again left to himself for several hours.

When evening came, Markland had not reappeared; but doubtless something had detained him, and concluding all was right, Atherton descended the private staircase, and passed through the secret door into the library.

Constance was there and alone. Lights were placed upon the table beside which she was seated. She was reading a letter at the moment, and seemed deeply interested in its contents; but, on hearing his footsteps, she rose to welcome him.

"This letter relates entirely to you," she said.

"And judging from your looks it does not bring good news," he remarked.

"It does not," she rejoined. "It is from Beppy Byrom, and was brought by a special messenger from Manchester. She informs me that a warrant for your arrest has just been received by the authorities of the town, who are enjoined to offer a re-

ward for your capture. Strict search will, consequently, be made for you, she says, and as Rawcliffe Hall may be visited, she sends this notice. She also states that it will be impossible to escape to France from any English port, as an embargo is now laid on all vessels. The letter thus concludes: 'If you have any communication with Captain Legh, pray tell him, if he should be driven to extremity, he will find an asylum in my father's house.'"

"Have you returned any answer to this kind letter?" inquired Atherton.

"No—it would not have been prudent to detain the messenger. During his brief stay, Markland took care he should not have any conversation with the servants. Father Jerome was curious to ascertain the nature of his errand, and learnt that he came from Manchester—but nothing more. I know not what you may resolve upon; but if you decide on flight, you will need funds. In this pocket-book are bank-notes to a considerable amount. Nay, do not hesitate to take it," she added, "you are under no obligation to me. The money is your own."

Thus urged, Atherton took the pocket-book, and said:

"Before I decide upon the steps I ought to take in this dangerous emergency, let me mention a

matter to you that has weighed upon my mind. In yonder cabinet are certain papers, which I desire to confide to your care. They contain proofs that I am the rightful heir to this property—the most important of the documents being a statement drawn up by your father, and signed by him, immediately before his death. Now listen to me, Constance. Should I fall into the hands of the enemy—should I die the death of a traitor—it is my wish that those documents should never be produced."

Constance could not repress an exclamation.

"All will be over then," he proceeded, calmly. "And why should a dark story, which can only bring dishonour on our family, be revealed? Let the secret be buried in my grave. If I am remembered at all, let it be as Atherton Legh, and not as Oswald Rawcliffe."

"Your wishes shall be fulfilled," she replied, deeply moved. "But I trust the dire necessity may never arise."

"We must prepare for the worst," he said. "Here is the key. See that the papers are safe."

She unlocked the cabinet, and opened all the drawers. They were empty.

"The papers are gone," she cried.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Atherton, springing towards her.

'Twas perfectly true, nevertheless. Further investigation showed that the documents must have been abstracted.

"There is but one person who can have taken them," said Atherton. "To that person the importance of the papers would be known—nor would he hesitate to deprive me of the proofs of my birth."

"I think you wrong him by these suspicions," said Constance—though her looks showed that she herself shared them. "What motive could he have for such an infamous act?"

"I cannot penetrate his motive, unless it is that he seeks to prevent my claim to the title and property. But malignant as he is, I could scarcely have imagined he would proceed to such a length as this."

"Granting you are right in your surmise, how can Father Jerome have discovered the existence of the papers? You placed them in the cabinet yourself I presume, and the key has been in your own possession ever since."

"True. But from him a lock would be no safeguard. If he knew the papers were there, their removal would be easy. But he will not destroy them, because their possession will give him the power he covets, and no doubt he persuades him-

self he will be able to obtain his own price for them. But I will force him to give them up."

At this juncture the door was opened, and Monica, entering hastily, called out to Atherton:

"Away at once, or you will be discovered. Father Jerome is coming hither. He has just left my mother's room."

But the young man did not move.

"I have something to say to him."

"Do not say it now!" implored Constance.

"No better opportunity could offer," rejoined Atherton. "I will tax him with his villainy."

"What does all this mean?" cried Monica, astonished and alarmed.

But before any explanation could be given, the door again opened, and Father Jerome stood before them.

VII.

Atherton questions the Priest.

THE priest did not manifest any surprise on beholding Atherton, but saluting him formally, said:

"I did not expect to find you here, sir, or I should not have intruded. But I will retire."

"Stay!" cried Atherton. "I have a few questions to put to you. First let me ask if you knew I was in the house?"

"I fancied so," replied the priest—"though no one has told me you were here. I suppose it was thought best not to trust me," he added, glancing at Constance.

"It was my wish that you should be kept in ignorance of the matter," observed Atherton.

"I am to understand, then, that you doubt me, sir," observed the priest. "I am sorry for it. You do me a great injustice. I am most anxious to serve you. Had I been consulted I should have deemed it my duty to represent to you the great risk you would run in taking refuge here—but I would have aided in your concealment, as I will do now; and

my services may be called in question sooner, perhaps, than you imagine, for the house is likely to be searched."

"How know you that?" demanded Atherton.

"There has been a messenger here from Manchester——"

"I thought you did not see him, father?" interrupted Constance.

"I saw him and conversed with him," rejoined the priest; "and I learnt that a warrant is out for the arrest of Captain Atherton Legh, and a large reward offered for his apprehension. At the same time I learnt that this house would be strictly searched. Whether you will remain here, or fly, is for your own consideration."

"I shall remain here at all hazards," replied Atherton, fixing a keen look upon him.

"I think you have decided rightly, sir," observed the priest. "Should they come, I will do my best to baffle the officers."

"I will take good care you shall not betray me," said Atherton.

"Betray you, sir!" exclaimed the priest, indignantly. "I have no such intention."

"You shall not have the opportunity," was the rejoinder.

At a sign from Atherton, Constance and Monica withdrew to the further end of the room.

"Now, sir, you will guess what is coming," said Atherton, addressing the priest in a stern tone. "I desire you will instantly restore the papers you have taken from yonder cabinet."

"What papers?" asked Father Jerome.

"Nay, never feign surprise. You know well what I mean. I want Sir Richard Rawcliffe's confession, and the other documents accompanying it."

"Has any person but yourself seen Sir Richard's written confession?"

"No one."

"Then if it is lost you cannot prove that such a document ever existed."

"It is not lost," said Atherton. "You know where to find it, and find it you shall."

"Calm yourself, or you will alarm the ladies. I have not got the papers you require, but you ought to have taken better care of them, since without them you will be unable to establish your claim to the Rawcliffe estates and title."

"No more of this trifling," said Atherton. "I am not in the humour for it. I must have the papers without further delay."

"I know nothing about them," said the priest, doggedly. "You tell me there were such documents, and I am willing to believe you, but sceptical persons may doubt whether they ever existed."

"Will you produce them?"

"How can I, since I have them not."

"Their destruction would be an execrable act."

"It would—but it is not likely they will be destroyed. On the contrary, I should think they will be carefully preserved."

Very significantly uttered, these words left Atherton in no doubt as to their import.

While he was meditating a reply, Markland hurriedly entered the room—alarm depicted in his countenance.

Startled by his looks, Constance and Monica immediately came forward.

"You must instantly return to your hiding-place, sir," said the butler to Atherton. "The officers are here, and mean to search the house. Fortunately, the drawbridge is raised, and I would not allow it to be lowered till I had warned you."

"Are you sure they are the officers?" exclaimed Constance.

"Quite sure. I have seen them and spoken with them. They have a warrant."

"Then it will be impossible to refuse them admittance."

"Impossible!" cried the butler.

While this conversation took place, Atherton

had opened the secret door in the bookcase, but he now came back, and said to the priest:

"You must bear me company, father. I shall feel safer if I have you with me."

"But I may be of use in misleading the officers," said Father Jerome.

"Markland will take care of them. He can be trusted. Come along!"

And seizing the priest's arm, he dragged him through the secret door.

As soon as this was accomplished, Markland rushed out of the room, and hurried to the porter's-lodge.

VIII.

The Search.

No sooner was the drawbridge lowered than several persons on horseback rode into the court-yard.

By this time, some of the servants had come forth with lights, so that the unwelcome visitors could be distinguished. The party consisted of half a dozen mounted constables, at the head of whom was Mr. Fowden, the Manchester magistrate. Ordering two of the officers to station themselves near the drawbridge, and enjoining the others to keep strict watch over the house, Mr. Fowden dismounted, and addressing Markland, who was standing near, desired to be conducted to Miss Rawcliffe.

"Inform her that I am Mr. Fowden, one of the Manchester magistrates," he said. "I will explain my errand myself."

"Pray step this way, sir," rejoined Markland, bowing respectfully.

Ushering the magistrate into the entrance hall, Markland helped to disencumber him of his heavy

cloak, which he laid with the magistrate's cocked-hat and whip upon a side-table, and then led him to the library—announcing him, as he had been desired, to Constance, who with her cousin received him in a very stately manner, and requested him to be seated.

"I am sorry to intrude upon you at this hour, Miss Rawcliffe," said Mr. Fowden; "but I have no option, as you will understand, when I explain my errand. I hold a warrant for the arrest of Captain Atherton Legh, late of the Manchester Regiment, who has been guilty of levying war against our sovereign lord the king, and having received information that he is concealed here, I must require that he may be immediately delivered up to me. In the event of your refusal to comply with my order, I shall be compelled to search the house, while you will render yourself liable to a heavy penalty, and perhaps imprisonment, for harbouring him after this notice."

"You are at liberty to search the house, Mr. Fowden," replied Constance, with as much firmness as she could command; "and if you find Captain Legh. I must bear the penalties with which you threaten me."

"'Tis a disagreeable duty that I have to perform, I can assure you, Miss Rawcliffe," said Mr.

Fowden. "I knew Captain Legh before he joined the rebellion, and I regret that by his folly—for I will call it by no harsher name—he should have cut short his career. I also knew Captain Dawson very well, and am equally sorry for him—poor misguided youth! he is certain to suffer for his rash and criminal act."

Here a sob burst from Monica, and drew the magistrate's attention to her.

"I was not aware of your presence, Miss Butler," he said, "or I would not have hurt your feelings by the remark. I know you are engaged to poor Jemmy Dawson. I sincerely hope that clemency may be shown him, and all those who have acted from a mistaken sense of loyalty. I will frankly confess that I myself was much captivated by the manner of the young Chevalier when I saw him as he passed through Manchester. But you will think I am a Jacobite, if I talk thus—whereas, I am a staunch Whig. I must again express my regret at the steps I am obliged to take, Miss Rawcliffe," he continued, addressing Constance; "and if I seem to discredit your assurance that Captain Legh is not concealed here, it is because it is at variance with information I have received, and which I have reason to believe must be correct. As a Catholic,

you have a priest resident in the house—Father Jerome. Pray send for him!"

Scarcely able to hide her embarrassment Constance rang the bell, and when Markland answered the summons, she told him Mr. Fowden desired to see Father Jerome.

"His reverence has gone to Newton, and won't return to-night," replied the butler.

The magistrate looked very hard at him, but Markland bore the scrutiny well.

"I think you could find him if you chose," remarked Mr. Fowden.

"I must go to Newton, then, to do it, sir. I'll take you to his room, if you please."

"Nay, I don't doubt what you tell me, but 'tis strange he should have gone out. However, I must make a perquisition of the house."

"Markland will attend you, Mr. Fowden, and show you into all the rooms," said Constance, who had become far less uneasy since her conversation with the good-natured magistrate. "Before you commence your investigations, perhaps you will satisfy yourself that no one is concealed in this room. There is a screen—pray look behind it!"

"I will take your word, Miss Rawcliffe, that no one is here," replied the magistrate, bowing.

"I won't bid you good-night, Mr. Fowden," said

Constance, "because I hope when you have completed your search you will take supper with us."

The magistrate again bowed and quitted the room.

Attended by Markland, bearing a light, Mr. Fowden then began his survey, but it soon became evident to the butler that he did not mean the search to be very strict. Ascending the great oak staircase, he looked into the different rooms in the corridor, as they passed them. On being told that one of these rooms belonged to Miss Rawcliffe, the magistrate declined to enter it, and so in the case of another, which he learnt was occupied by Monica. In the adjoining chamber they found Mrs. Butler kneeling before a crucifix, and Mr. Fowden immediately retired without disturbing her.

IX.

Who was found in the dismantled Rooms.

AFTER opening the doors of several other rooms, and casting a hasty glance inside, the magistrate said:

"I understand there is a portion of the house which for some time has been shut up. Take me to it."

Markland obeyed rather reluctantly, and when he came to a door at the end of the corridor, communicating, as he said, with the dismantled apartments, it took him some time to unlock it.

"I ought to tell you, sir," he said, assuming a very mysterious manner, calculated to impress his hearer, "that these rooms are said to be haunted, and none of the servants like to enter them, even in the daytime. I don't share their superstitious fears, but I certainly have heard strange noises——"

"There! what was that?" exclaimed Mr. Fowden. "I thought I saw a dark figure glide past, but I could not detect the sound of footsteps."

"Turn back, if you're at all afraid, sir," suggested Markland.

"I'm not afraid of ghosts," rejoined the magistrate; "and as to human beings I don't fear them, because I have pistols in my pockets. Go on."

Markland said nothing more, but opened the first door on the left, and led his companion into a room which was almost destitute of furniture, and had a most melancholy air; but it did not look so dreary as the next room they entered. Here the atmosphere was so damp that the butler was seized with a fit of coughing which lasted for more than a minute, and Mr. Fowden declared there must be echoes in the rooms, for he had certainly heard sounds at a distance.

"No doubt there are echoes, sir," said the butler.

"But these must be peculiar to the place," observed the magistrate; "for they sounded uncommonly like footsteps. Give me the light."

And taking the candle from the butler, and drawing a pistol from his pocket, he marched quickly into the next room. No one was there, but as he hastened on he caught sight of a retreating figure, and called out:

"Stand! or I fire."

Heedless of the injunction, the person made a rapid exit through the side door, but was prevented from fastening it by the magistrate, who followed

him so quickly that he had no time to hide himself, and stood revealed to his pursuer.

"What do I see?" exclaimed Mr. Fowden, in astonishment. "Father Jerome here! Why I was told you were in Newton."

"His reverence ought to be there," said Markland, who had now come up.

"I must have an explanation of your strange conduct, sir," said the magistrate.

"His reverence had better be careful what he says," observed Markland.

"Answer one question, and answer it truly, as you value your own safety," pursued Mr. Fowden. "Are you alone in these rooms?"

The priest looked greatly embarrassed. Markland made a gesture to him behind the magistrate's back.

"Are you alone here, I repeat?" demanded Mr. Fowden.

"I have no one with me now, sir, if that is what you would learn," replied the priest.

"Then you have had a companion. Where is he? He cannot have left the house. The drawbridge is guarded."

"He is not in this part of the house," replied the priest. "I will give you further explanation

anon," he added, in a lower tone. "All I need now say is, that I am here on compulsion."

Mr. Fowden forbore to interrogate him further, and after examining the room, which was that wherein Atherton had passed the two previous nights as related, and discovering nothing to reward his scrutiny, he expressed his intention of going down-stairs.

"I don't think I shall make any capture here," he remarked.

"I am sure you won't," replied the priest.

Very much to Markland's relief, the magistrate then quitted the disused rooms, and taking Father Jerome with him descended to the hall.

After a little private conversation with the priest, he made a fresh investigation of the lower apartments, but with no better success than heretofore, and he was by no means sorry when Miss Rawcliffe sent a message to him begging his company at supper. The servant who brought the message likewise informed him that the constables in the court-yard had been well supplied with ale.

"I hope they haven't drunk too much," said the magistrate. "Don't let them have any more, and tell them I shall come out presently."

X.

A successful Stratagem.

ACCOMPANIED by the priest, he then proceeded to the dining-room, where he found Constance and Monica. A very nice supper had been prepared, and he did ample justice to the good things set before him. Markland, who had been absent for a short time, appeared with a bottle of old madeira, and a look passed between him and the young ladies, which did not escape the quick eyes of the priest.

The magistrate could not fail to be struck by the splendid wine brought him, and the butler took care to replenish his glass whenever it chanced to be empty.

Altogether the supper passed off more agreeably than could have been expected under such circumstances, for the young ladies had recovered their spirits, and the only person who seemed ill at ease was Father Jerome.

Towards the close of the repast, Mr. Fowden said:

"I fear I shall be obliged to trespass a little

further on your hospitality, Miss Rawcliffe. I hope I shall not put you to inconvenience if I take up my quarters here to-night. I care not how you lodge me—put me in a haunted room if you think proper."

"You are quite welcome to remain here as long as you please, Mr. Fowden," said Constance—"the rather that I feel certain you will make no discovery. Markland will find you a chamber, where I hope you may rest comfortably."

"I will order a room to be got ready at once for his honour," said Markland.

"In the locked-up corridor," observed the magistrate, with a laugh.

"No, not there, sir," said the butler.

"With your permission, Miss Rawcliffe, my men must also be quartered in the house," said Mr. Fowden.

"You hear, Markland," observed Constance.

"I will give directions accordingly," replied the butler.

And he quitted the room.

"I shall be blamed for neglect of duty if I do not make a thorough search," said the magistrate. "But I fancy the bird has flown," he added, with a glance at the priest.

Father Jerome made no reply, but Constance remarked, with apparent indifference:

"No one can have left the house without crossing the drawbridge, and that has been guarded. You will be able to state that you took all necessary precautions to prevent an escape."

"Yes, I shall be able to state that—and something besides," replied the magistrate, again glancing at the priest.

Just then, a noise was heard like the trampling of horses. Mr. Fowden uttered an exclamation of surprise, and a smile passed over the countenances of the two young ladies.

"I should have thought the men were crossing the drawbridge if I had not felt quite sure they would not depart without me," said Mr. Fowden.

"They have crossed the drawbridge—that's quite certain," observed the priest.

At this moment Markland entered the room.

"What have you been about?" cried the magistrate, angrily. "Have you dared to send my men away?"

"No, sir," replied the butler, vainly endeavouring to maintain a grave countenance; "but it seems that a trick has been played upon them."

"A trick!" exclaimed the magistrate.

"Yes, and it has proved highly successful. Some one has taken your honour's hat and cloak from the hall, and thus disguised, has ridden off with the

men, who didn't find out their mistake in the darkness."

The two girls could not control their laughter.

"This may appear a good joke to you, sir," cried the magistrate, who was highly incensed, addressing the butler; "but you'll pay dearly for it, I can promise you. You have aided and abetted the escape of a rebel and a traitor, and will be transported, if not hanged."

"I have aided no escape, sir," replied the butler. "All I know is, that some one wrapped in a cloak, whom I took to be you, came out of the house, sprang on a horse, and bidding the men follow him, rode off."

"He has prevented pursuit by taking my horse," cried Mr. Fowden; "and the worst of it is he is so much better mounted than the men that he can ride away from them at any moment. No chance now of his capture. Well, I shall be laughed at as an egregious dupe, but I must own I have been very cleverly outwitted."

"You are too kind-hearted, I am sure, Mr. Fowden," said Constance, "not to be better pleased that things have turned out thus, than if you had carried back a prisoner. And pray don't trouble yourself about the loss of your horse. You shall have

the best in the stable. But you won't think of returning to Manchester to-night."

"Well—no," he replied, after a few moments' deliberation. "I am very comfortable here, and don't feel inclined to stir. I shouldn't be surprised if we have some intelligence before morning."

"Very likely," replied Constance; "and I think you have decided wisely to remain. It's a long ride at this time of night."

Mr. Fowden, as we have shown, was very good-tempered, and disposed to take things easily.

He was secretly not sorry that Atherton had eluded him, though he would rather the escape had been managed differently.

However, it was quite clear it could not have been accomplished by his connivance. That was something.

Consoled by this reflection, he finished his supper as quietly as if nothing had occurred to interrupt it.

Immediately after supper Constance and her cousin retired, and left him to enjoy a bottle of claret with the priest.

They were still discussing it when a great bustle in the court-yard announced that the constables had come back.

"Here they are!" cried the magistrate, spring-

ing to his feet. "I must go and see what has happened."

And he hurried out of the room, followed by Father Jerome.

By the time they reached the court-yard all the constables had dismounted, and were talking to Markland and the gate-porter. Two other men-servants were standing by bearing torches.

No sooner did Mr. Fowden make his appearance than one of the constables came up.

"Here's a pretty business, sir," said the man in an apologetic tone. "We've been nicely taken in. We thought we had you with us, and never suspected anything wrong, till we got out of the park, when the gentleman at our head suddenly dashed off at full speed, and disappeared in the darkness. We were so confounded at first that we didn't know what to do, but the truth soon flashed upon us, and we galloped after him as hard as we could. Though we could see nothing of him, the clatter of his horse's hoofs guided us for a time, but by-and-by this ceased, and we fancied he must have quitted the road and taken to the open. We were quite certain he hadn't forded the Mersey, or we must have heard him."

"No—no—he wouldn't do that, Glossop," remarked the magistrate.

"Well, we rode on till we got to a lane," pursued the constable, "and two of our party went down it, while the rest kept to the high-road. About a mile further we encountered a waggon, and questioned the driver, but no one had passed him, so we turned back, and were soon afterwards joined by our mates, who had been equally unsuccessful. Feeling now quite nonplussed, we deemed it best to return to the hall—and here we are ready to attend to your honour's orders."

"'Twould be useless to attempt further pursuit to-night, Glossop," rejoined the magistrate. "Captain Legh has got off by a very clever stratagem, and will take good care you don't come near him. By this time, he's far enough off you may depend upon it."

"Exactly my opinion, sir," observed Glossop. "We've lost him for the present, that's quite certain."

"Well, we'll consider what is best to be done in the morning," said Mr. Fowden. "Meantime you can take up your quarters here for the night. Stable your horses, and then go to bed."

"Not without supper, your honour," pleaded Glossop. "We're desperately hungry."

"Why you're never satisfied," cried the magistrate.

"But perhaps Mr. Markland will find something for you."

Leaving the constables to shift for themselves, which he knew they were very well able to do, Mr. Fowden then returned to the dining-room, and finished the bottle of claret with the priest. Though his plans had been frustrated, and he had lost both his horse and his expected prisoner, he could not help laughing very heartily at the occurrence of the evening.

Later on, he was conducted to a comfortable bed-chamber by the butler.

XI.

Atherton meets with Dr. Deacon at Rosthern.

HAVING distanced his pursuers as related, Atherton speeded across the country till he reached Bucklow Hill, where a solitary roadside inn was then to be found, and thinking he should be safe there, he resolved to stop at the house for the night.

Accordingly, he roused up the host, and soon procured accommodation for himself and his steed.

The chamber in which he was lodged was small, with a low ceiling, encumbered by a large rafter, but it was scrupulously clean and tidy, and the bed-linen was white as snow, and smelt of lavender.

Next morning, he was up betimes, and his first business was to hire a man to take back Mr. Fowden's horse. The ostler readily undertook the job, and set out for Manchester, charged with a letter of explanation, while Atherton, having breakfasted and paid his score, proceeded on foot along the road to Knutsford.

Before leaving the inn he informed the landlord that he was going to Northwich, and thence to

Chester; but, in reality, he had no fixed plan, and meant to be guided by circumstances. If the risk had not been so great, he would gladly have availed himself of Dr. Byrom's offer, conveyed by Beppy to Constance, of a temporary asylum in the doctor's house at Manchester—but he did not dare to venture thither.

After revolving several plans, all of which were fraught with difficulties and dangers, he came to the conclusion that it would be best to proceed to London, where he would be safer than elsewhere, and might possibly find an opportunity of embarking for Flanders or Holland. Moreover, he might be able to render some assistance to his unfortunate friends. But, as we have said, he had no decided plans; and it is quite certain that nothing but the apprehension of further treachery on the part of Father Jerome prevented him from secretly returning to Rawcliffe Hall.

He walked on briskly for about a mile, and then struck into a path on the left, which he thought would lead him through the fields to Tatton Park, but it brought him to a height from which he obtained a charming view of Rosthern Mere—the whole expanse of this lovely lake being spread out before him. On the summit of a high bank, at the southern extremity of the mere, stood the ancient

church, embosomed in trees, and near it were the few scattered farm-houses and cottages that constituted the village.

The morning being very bright and clear, the prospect was seen to the greatest advantage, and, after contemplating it for a few minutes, he descended the woody slopes, and on reaching the valley, shaped his course along the margin of the lake towards the village, which was not very far distant.

As he proceeded fresh beauties were disclosed, and he more than once stopped to gaze at them. Presently he drew near a delightful spot, where a babbling brook, issuing from the mere, crossed the road, and disappeared amid an adjoining grove. Leaning against the rail of a little wooden bridge, and listening to the murmuring brooklet, stood an elderly personage. His features were stamped with melancholy, and his general appearance seemed much changed, but Atherton at once recognised Dr. Deacon.

Surprised at seeing him there, the young man hastened on, and as he advanced the doctor raised his head and looked at him.

After a moment's scrutiny, he exclaimed:

"Do my eyes deceive me, or is it Atherton Legh?" And when the other replied in the affirma-

tive, he said: "What are you doing here? Are you aware that a reward is offered for your apprehension? You are running into danger."

"I have just had a very narrow escape of arrest," replied Atherton; "and am in search of a place of concealment. If I could be safe anywhere, I should think it must be in this secluded village."

"I will give you temporary shelter," said the doctor. "I have been so persecuted in Manchester since the prince's retreat, and the surrender of Carlisle, that I have been compelled to retire to this quiet place. Come with me to my cottage—but I cannot answer for your safety."

"I would willingly accept the offer if I did not fear I should endanger you," replied Atherton.

"Let not that consideration deter you," said Dr. Deacon. "It matters little what happens to me now that I have lost my sons."

"You need not despair about them, sir," rejoined Atherton. "They will be allowed the cartel."

"No—no—no," cried the doctor. "They will be put to death. I ought to be resigned to their cruel fate, since they have done their duty, but I have not the fortitude I deemed I had."

And he groaned aloud.

"Better and braver young men never lived," said Atherton, in accents of deep commiseration.

"And if they must die, they will perish in a noble cause. But I still hope they may be spared."

"They would not ask or accept a pardon from the usurper," said Dr. Deacon. "No, they are doomed—unless they can escape as you have done."

"Have you heard of your second son, Robert, whom we were obliged to leave at Kendal, owing to an attack of fever?" inquired Atherton.

"Yes—he is better. He will do well if he has not a relapse," replied the doctor. "He wrote to me, begging me not to go to him, or I should have set off to Kendal at once. But do not let us stand talking here. My cottage is close by."

So saying, he led Atherton to a pretty little tenement, situated near the lake. A garden ran down to the water's edge, where was a landing-place with wooden steps, beside which a boat was moored.

The cottage, which was more roomy and convenient than it looked, belonged to an old couple, named Brereton, who were devoted to Dr. Deacon, and he had strong claims to their gratitude, as he had cured Dame Brereton of a disorder, pronounced fatal by other medical men.

On entering the cottage, the doctor deemed it necessary to caution Mrs. Brereton in regard to Atherton, and then ushered his guest into a small

parlour, the windows of which commanded a lovely view of the lake. Had the doctor been free from anxiety he must have been happy in such a tranquil abode. But he was well-nigh heart-broken, and ever dwelling upon the sad position of his sons.

A simple breakfast, consisting of a bowl of milk and a brown loaf, awaited him, and he invited Atherton to partake of the rustic fare, offering him some cold meat and new-laid eggs in addition, but the young man declined, having already breakfasted.

Very little satisfied the doctor, and having quickly finished his meal, he resumed his conversation with Atherton.

"I know not what your opinion may be," he said; "but I think the grand error committed by the prince was in avoiding an engagement. He ought to have attacked the Duke of Cumberland at Lichfield. A battle would have been decisive, and if the prince had been victorious his ultimate success must have been assured. But the retreat without an engagement was fatal to the cause. The Scottish chiefs, I know, refused to march further than Derby, but if they had been forced to fight, their conduct would have been totally different. Even if the prince had been worsted — had he fallen — he would have left a glorious name be-

hind him! Had my own brave sons died sword in hand, I should have been reconciled to their loss, but to think that they have been compelled to retreat ingloriously, without striking a blow, because their leaders lost heart, enrages me, and sharpens my affliction. Then I consider that the Manchester Regiment has been wantonly sacrificed. It ought never to have been left at Carlisle. That the prince thought the place tenable, and meant to reinforce the scanty garrison, I nothing doubt—but he lacked the means. Surrender was therefore unavoidable. I shall always think that the regiment has been sacrificed—but I blame Colonel Townley, and not the prince."

"Disastrous as the result has been, I must take up Colonel Townley's defence," said Atherton. "He felt certain he could hold out till he was relieved by the prince, and all the officers shared his opinion—none being more confident than your gallant son Theodore."

"Alas!" exclaimed the doctor, bitterly. "Of what avail is bravery against such engines of destruction as were brought to bear against the town by the Duke of Cumberland. But could not a desperate sortie have been made? Could you not have cut your way through the enemy? Death

would have been preferable to such terms of surrender as were exacted by the duke."

"Such an attempt as you describe was made, sir," replied Atherton, "but it failed; I, myself, was engaged in it, and was captured."

"True, I now remember. Forgive me. Grief has made me oblivious. But I must not allow my own private sorrows to engross me to the neglect of others. Can I assist you in any way?"

Atherton then informed him of his design to proceed to London, and the doctor approved of the plan, though he thought the journey would be attended by considerable risk.

"Still, if you get to London you will be comparatively secure, and may perhaps be able to negotiate a pardon. Dr. Byrom has promised to come over to me to-day, and may perhaps bring his daughter with him. He has considerable influence with several persons of importance in London, and may be able to serve you. We shall hear what he says."

"But why think of me?" cried Atherton. "Why do you not urge him to use his influence in behalf of your sons?"

"He requires no urging," replied Dr. Deacon. "But I have told you that I will not ask a pardon for them—nor would they accept it if clogged with certain conditions."

Atherton said no more, for he felt that the doctor was immovable.

Shortly afterwards Dr. Deacon arose and begged Atherton to excuse him, as he usually devoted an hour in each day to a religious work on which he was engaged. Before leaving the room, he placed a book on the table near Atherton, and on opening it the young man found it was a prayer-book published some years previously by the doctor, entitled, "*A Complete Collection of Devotions, both public and private, taken from the Apostolic Constitution, Liturgies, and Common Prayers of the Catholic Church.*"

Atherton was familiar with the volume, as he had occasionally attended Dr. Deacon's church, but being now in a serious frame of mind, some of the prayers to which he turned and recited aloud produced a deeper effect upon him than heretofore.

When Dr. Deacon returned and found him thus occupied he expressed great satisfaction, and joined him in his devotions.

Before concluding, the doctor dropped on his knees, and offered up an earnest supplication for the restoration to health of his son Robert, and for the deliverance of his two other sons.

XII.

A Sad Communication is made to Dr. Deacon.

HALF an hour later Dr. Byrom and his daughter arrived.

They came on horseback—one steed sufficing for both—Beppy being seated behind her father on a pillion, as was then the pleasant custom.

Dr. Byrom put up his horse at the little village inn, and then walked with his daughter to the cottage. Dr. Deacon met them at the door, and while greeting them kindly, informed them in a whisper whom they would find within.

Both were rejoiced to see Atherton, and congratulated him on his escape from arrest.

"I saw Mr. Fowden this morning in Manchester," said Dr. Byrom. "He had just returned from Rawcliffe Hall. I laughed very heartily when he told me how cleverly you had tricked him; but I really believe he had no desire to arrest you, and was glad when you got off. The horse you appropriated for the nonce was brought back from Bucklow Hill, and is now in its owner's possession, but I think you carried your scruples to the extreme, as

you have given him a clue to the route you have taken, and the constables have been sent on both to Northwich and Macclesfield."

"I don't think they will look for me here," observed Atherton.

"No, Mr. Fowden's notion is that you will make for London, and I should have thought so too, had you not sent back the horse; but now you had better keep quiet for a few days."

"Why not come to us?" cried Beppy. "You will be in the very midst of your enemies, it is true, but no search will be made for you. No one would think you could be there."

"But some one would be sure to discover me. No; I am infinitely obliged, but I could not do it —I should only involve Dr. Byrom in trouble."

"Don't heed my risk," said Dr. Byrom. "I will give you shelter, if you require it."

"I'm quite sure we could conceal you," cried Beppy; "and only think how exciting it would be if the boroughreeve should call, and you had to be shut up in a closet! Or, better still, if you were carefully disguised, you might be presented to him without fear of detection. As to Mr. Fowden, I shouldn't mind him, even if he came on purpose to search for you. I'm sure I could contrive some

little plot that would effectually delude him. 'Twould only be like a game at hide-and-seek."

"But if I lost the game, the penalty would be rather serious," replied Atherton. "I have no doubt of your cleverness, Miss Byrom; but I must not expose myself to needless risk."

While this conversation was going on, Dr. Byrom observed to his old friend, "I have something to say to you in private. Can we go into another room?"

Struck by the gravity of his manner, Dr. Deacon took him into an adjoining apartment.

"I am afraid you have some bad news for me," he remarked.

"I have," replied Dr. Byrom, still more gravely. "Your son Robert——"

"What of him?" interrupted Dr. Deacon. "Has he had a relapse of the fever? If so, I must go to him at once."

"'Twill not be necessary, my good friend," replied Dr. Byrom, mournfully. "He does not require your attendance."

Dr. Deacon looked at him fixedly for a moment, and reading the truth in his countenance, murmured, "He is gone!"

"Yes, he has escaped the malice of his enemies," said Dr. Byrom.

"Heaven's will be done!" ejaculated Dr. Deacon, with a look of profound resignation. "Truly I have need of fortitude to bear the weight of affliction laid upon me. Robert!—my dear, brave son! —gone!—gone!"

"Be comforted, my good friend," said Dr. Byrom, in accents of profound sympathy. "His troubles are over."

"True," replied the other. "But the blow has well-nigh stunned me. Give me a chair, I pray you."

As Dr. Byrom complied, he remarked:

"I ought to have broken this sad news to you with greater care—and, indeed, I hesitated to mention it."

"You have acted most kindly—most judiciously —like the friend you have ever shown yourself," rejoined Dr. Deacon. "All is for the best I doubt not. But when I think of my dear boy Robert, my heart is like to burst. He was so kind, so gallant, so loyal, so true."

"He has been removed from a world of misery," said Dr. Byrom. "Reflection, I am sure, will reconcile you to his fate, sad as it now may seem."

"I have misjudged myself," said Dr. Deacon. "When I sent forth my three sons on this ex-

pedition, I thought I was prepared for any eventuality, but I now find I was wrong. One I have already lost—the other two will follow quickly."

XIII.

A Journey to London proposed.

"You will be much grieved to hear that poor Robert Deacon is dead," observed Beppy, when she was left alone with Atherton. "Papa had just received the sad intelligence before we left Manchester, and he is now about to communicate it to the doctor. I pity Dr. Deacon from my heart, for I fear the loss of his sons will kill him. But I have other news for you, which papa has not had time to relate. Jemmy Dawson has made an attempt to escape; but has failed. At Dunstable he contrived to elude the guard, and got out upon the downs, but his flight being discovered, he was pursued and captured. He is now lodged in Newgate. Papa has just received a letter from him. It was confided to a Manchester friend who visited him in prison. The same gentleman brought another letter for Monica, which papa undertook to send to her privately—for the post is no longer safe—all suspected letters being opened and examined. Poor Jemmy seems very despondent. Papa is going to London shortly, and no doubt will see him."

"If Dr. Byrom goes to London, would he take

charge of Monica and Constance, think you?" cried Atherton.

"I am sure he would," she replied. "But here he comes," she continued, as Dr. Byrom entered the room. "I will put the question to him. Papa," she went on, "I have been talking matters over to Captain Legh, and have mentioned to him that you are likely to go to London before long. Should you do so, he hopes you will take charge of Monica and Miss Rawcliffe."

"They will require an escort," added Atherton; "and there is no one whom they would prefer to you—especially under present circumstances."

Thus appealed to, Dr. Byrom very readily assented, and inquired when the young ladies would be disposed to undertake the journey.

"No arrangement has been made as yet," said Atherton; "but I am sure when Monica receives the letter from Jemmy Dawson, which I understand you are about to forward to her, she will be all anxiety to be near him; and I am equally sure that Constance will desire to accompany her."

"I will ascertain their wishes without delay," said Dr. Byrom. "Before returning to Manchester, I will ride over to Rawcliffe Hall, and deliver poor Jemmy's letter in person. I shall then hear what Miss Butler says. My visit will answer a double

purpose, for I shall be able to give them some intelligence of you, and convey any message you may desire to send them."

"I cannot thank you sufficiently for your kindness, sir," said Atherton. "Pray tell Constance that I shall make my way to London in such manner as may best consist with safety, and I hope she will feel no uneasiness on my account. I sincerely trust she will go to London, as in that case I shall see her again before I embark for Flanders."

"I will deliver your message," replied Dr. Byrom, "and I hope we shall all meet in London. Immediately on my arrival there I shall endeavour to procure a pardon for you. Do not raise your expectations too high, for I may not be able to accomplish my purpose. But you may rely upon it I will do my best."

Atherton could scarcely find words to express his heartfelt thanks.

"Say no more," cried the doctor, grasping his hand warmly. "I shall be amply rewarded if I am successful."

"You have not said anything about it, papa," interposed Beppy. "But I hope you mean to take me with you to London. I must form one of the party."

"You would only be in the way," observed the doctor.

"Nothing of the sort. I should be of the greatest use, as you will find. You are the best and most good-natured papa in the world, and never refuse your daughter anything," she added, in a coaxing tone, which the doctor could not resist.

"I ought not to consent, but I suppose I must," he said.

"Yes, yes—it's quite settled," cried Beppy, with a glance of satisfaction at Atherton.

"Where are we to meet in London?" inquired the young man. "Possibly I may not see you again till I arrive there."

"You will hear of me at the St. James's Hotel, in Jermyn-street," replied the doctor. "And now I think we ought to start," he added to his daughter, "since we have to go to Rawcliffe Hall."

"But you have not taken leave of Dr. Deacon," cried Beppy.

"I shall not interrupt the prayers he is offering up for his son," replied her father. "Bid him adieu for us," he added to Atherton. "And now farewell, my dear young friend! Heaven guard you from all perils! May we meet again safely in London!"

Atherton attended his friends to the garden gate, but went no further. He watched them till they disappeared, and then returned sadly to the cottage.

XIV.

Jemmy Dawson's Letter.

THE unexpected arrival of Dr. Byrom and Beppy at Rawcliffe Hall, caused considerable perturbation to Constance and her cousin; but this was relieved as soon as the doctor explained that he brought good news of Atherton.

Before entering into any particulars, however, he delivered Jemmy Dawson's letter to Monica, telling her in what manner he had received it. Murmuring a few grateful words, she withdrew to her own room, and we shall follow her thither, leaving the others to talk over matters with which the reader is already acquainted.

The letter filled several sheets of paper, and had evidently been written at intervals.

Thus it ran.

St. Albans.

For a short time I have been free, and fondly persuaded myself I should soon behold you again. Alas! no such bliss was reserved for me. My fate

is ever perverse. I had not long regained my liberty, when I was captured, and taken back, and I am now so strictly watched that I shall have no second chance of escape.

Enraged at my attempt at flight, the officer in command of the guard threatened to fetter me, like a common felon, but as yet I have been spared that indignity.

You will easily imagine the state of grief and despair into which I was plunged by my ill success. I had buoyed myself up with false hopes. I felt quite sure that in a few days I should again clasp you to my heart. Deprived by a cruel fate of such unspeakable happiness, can you wonder at my distraction? While thus frenzied, had I possessed a weapon, I should certainly have put an end to my wretched existence. But I am somewhat calmer now, though still deeply depressed.

Oh! dearest Monica—the one being whom I love best!—I cannot longer endure this enforced separation from you. Never till now did I know how necessary you are to my existence. Pity me! pity me! I am sore afflicted.

Your presence would restore the serenity of mind I once enjoyed, and which I have now utterly lost. Come to me, and shed a gleam of happiness over the residue of my life. In a few days I shall

be lodged in a prison, but I shall not heed my confinement if you will visit me daily.

Should the worst fate befal me—as I have sad presentiments that it will—I shall be prepared to meet it, if you are with me at the last. Without you to strengthen me, my courage may fail. I need you, dearest Monica—need you more than ever. Come to me, I implore you!

I am ashamed of what I have written, but you will not despise me for my weakness. 'Tis not imprisonment I dread, but the torture of prolonged separation from you. Did I not love you so passionately I should be as careless as my companions in misfortune. They have little sympathy for me, for they cannot understand my grief. They would laugh at me if I told them I was ever thinking of you. Most of them live jovially enough, and appear entirely unconcerned as to the future. Whether they are really as indifferent as they seem, I much doubt. But they drink hard to drown care. The two Deacons, however, keep aloof from the rest. Colonel Townley, also, is greatly changed. He does not look downcast, but he has become exceedingly serious, and passes his time in long discourses with Father Saunderson, his priest and confessor, who is allowed to attend him. He often talks to me of you and Constance, and hopes that Atherton has

been able to embark for France. We have heard nothing of the latter, of course; and in his case no news is good news.

The inhabitants of the different towns and villages through which we have passed on our way to the metropolis, have displayed great animosity towards us, chiefly owing to the mischievous placards which have been everywhere spread about by the Government. In these placards the most monstrous charges are brought against us. It is gravely asserted that if we had defeated the Duke of Cumberland we meant to spit him alive and roast him. The bishops were to be burnt at the stake like Ridley and Latimer, and all the Protestant clergy massacred. That such absurd statements should have obtained credence seems impossible; but it is certain they have produced the effect designed, and that the minds of the common folk have been violently inflamed, as we have learnt to our cost, and as we may experience to a still greater extent when we reach London.

Newgate.

You will tremble, dearest Monica, when you learn that I am now immured in that dismal dungeon, the very name of which inspires terror; and

yet the prison is not so formidable as it has been represented.

I have a small cell on the master's side, as it is termed, and though the walls are of stone, the little window grated, and the door barred, I have no right to complain. I am far from harshly treated —indeed, every comfort I choose to pay for is allowed me. Nor am I locked up in my cell, except at night.

A great stone hall is our place of resort during the day. There my brother officers assemble, and there we are served—not with prison fare as you may imagine—but with as good provisions and as good wine as we could obtain at a tavern. For breakfast we have tea, coffee, or chocolate—according to choice—roast beef or mutton for dinner—claret or canary to wash it down—and some of my companions regale themselves after supper with a bowl of punch. Smoking, also, is allowed, and indeed several of the prisoners have pipes in their mouths all day long. From the stone hall a passage communicates with a tap-room, where different beverages are sold. Here the common malefactors repair, but happily they are prevented from coming further. From what I have just stated you will infer that we are not in that part of the gaol appropriated to felons—though we are stigmatised as the worst of

criminals—but with a certain leniency for which we ought to feel grateful we have been placed among the debtors.

Colonel Townley, Captain Moss, and Captain Holker, have each a commodious room. Tom Deacon and his brother Charles have the next cell to mine—but poor Adjutant Syddall is lodged in an infamous hole, owing to lack of money. All the officials, high and low, within the prison, seem anxious to lessen the rigour of our confinement as much as they can—especially, since most of us are able to live like gentlemen, and fee them handsomely.

For a prison, Newgate is comfortable enough, and as far as my own experience goes its ill reputation seems undeserved. No doubt the wards devoted to common felons are horrible, and I should die if I were shut up with the dreadful miscreants of whom I have caught a glimpse—but fortunately they are kept completely apart from us. We can hear their voices, and that is enough.

That I am melancholy in my prison does not proceed from any hardship I have to undergo—or from solitude, for I have too much society—but I pine and languish because I am separated from her I love.

Think not, if you come, in response to my

entreaties, that you will be prevented from visiting me. You will be admitted without difficulty, and no prying eye will disturb us.

And now since I have spoken of the good treatment we have experienced in prison, I must describe the indignities to which we were subjected on our way hither.

I have already mentioned that every effort has been made by the Government to inflame the minds of the populace against us. On our arrival at Islington, we learnt to our dismay, that tumultuous crowds were collected in the streets through which we should have to pass, and to afford them a gratifying spectacle, it was arranged that we should be led to prison in mock triumph.

Accordingly, the waggons in which we were placed were uncovered, so that we had no protection from the numerous missiles hurled at us as we were borne slowly along through the howling multitude, and I verily believe we should have been torn in pieces, if the mob could have got at us. Rebels and traitors were the mildest terms applied to us.

On the foremost waggon the rent and discoloured standard of our regiment was displayed, and a wretched creature dressed up for the occasion, as a bagpiper, sat behind the horses, playing a

coronach. But he was soon silenced, for a well-aimed brick-bat knocked him from his seat.

But though the crowd hooted us, pelted us, and shook their sticks at us, we meet with some compassion from the female spectators. Many ladies were stationed at the windows, and their looks betokened pity and sympathy.

Our progress through the streets was slow, owing to the vast crowd, and frequent hindrances occurred, but at the entrance to Newgate-street we were brought to a complete standstill, and had to endure all the terrible ribaldry of the mob, mingled with yells and groans, and followed up by showers of missiles, such as are hurled at poor wretches in the pillory, till the thoroughfare could be cleared.

At this juncture, a chance of escape was offered to Colonel Townley. Half a dozen sturdy fellows, who looked like professional pugilists, forced their way to the waggon, and one of the stoutest of the party called to him to jump out and trust to them. The colonel thanked them, but refused, and they were immediately afterwards thrust back by the guard.

Had the chance been mine I would have availed myself of it unhesitatingly. But Colonel Townley feels certain of obtaining the cartel, and would therefore run no risk.

Another tremendous scene occurred at the gates of the prison, and we were glad to find refuge in its walls. Here, at least, we were free from the insults of the rabble, and though we were all in a sorry plight, none of us, except poor Tom Syddall, had sustained any personal injury. Nor was he much hurt.

Our deplorable condition seemed to recommend us to the governor, and he showed us much kindness. Through his attention we were soon enabled to put on fresh habiliments, and make a decent appearance.

Thus I have discovered, as you see, that there may be worse places than Newgate. My confinement may be irksome, but I could bear it were I certain as to the future; but I am not so sanguine as my companions, and dare not indulge hopes that may never be realised.

Not a single person has visited me till to-day, when a Manchester gentleman, with whom I am acquainted, has come to see me in prison—and he offers to take charge of a letter, and will cause it to be safely delivered to you. He is a friend of Dr. Byrom. A private hand is better than the post, for they tell me all our letters are opened and read, and in some cases not even forwarded.

I therefore add these few hasty lines to what I

have already written. I am less wretched than I have been, but am still greatly dejected, and by no mental effort can I conquer the melancholy that oppresses me.

Come to me, then, dearest Monica! By all the love you bear me, I implore you come!

"I see how wretched thou art without me, dearest Jemmy," exclaimed Monica as she finished the letter; "and I should be the cruellest of my sex if I did not instantly obey thy summons. Comfort thee, my beloved! comfort thee! I fly to thee at once!"

XV.

The Parting between Monica and her Mother.

By this time, Dr. Byrom had not only delivered Atherton's message to Constance, but explained his own intentions, and she had at once decided upon accompanying him to London.

When Monica, therefore, appeared and announced her design, she learnt that her wishes had been anticipated. After some little discussion it was settled — at Monica's urgent entreaty — that they should start on the following day. Constance and Monica were to post in the family coach to Macclesfield, where they would be joined by Dr. Byrom and his daughter; and from this point they were all to travel to town together in the same roomy conveyance. The plan gave general satisfaction, and was particularly agreeable to Beppy.

All being settled, the party repaired to the dining-room, where luncheon had been set out for the visitors. Scarcely had they sat down, when Father Jerome made his appearance, and though the ordinary courtesies were exchanged between him and Dr. Byrom, it was evident there was mutual distrust.

As they rose from table, the doctor took Constance aside, and said to her in a low tone:

"What do you mean to do in regard to Father Jerome? Will you leave him here?"

"I must," she replied. "He is necessary to my Aunt Butler. During my absence I shall commit the entire control of the house to my father's faithful old servant, Markland, on whom I can entirely rely."

"You could not do better," remarked Dr. Byrom, approvingly. And he added, with a certain significance, "I was about to give you a caution, but I find it is not needed."

Shortly afterwards the doctor and Beppy took their departure, and proceeded to Manchester.

Constance and Monica spent the rest of the day in making preparations for the journey. As may be supposed, Constance had many directions to give to old Markland, who seemed much gratified by the trust reposed in him, and promised the utmost attention to his young mistress's injunctions.

Clearly Father Jerome felt himself aggrieved that the old butler was preferred to him, for he intimated that he should have been very happy to undertake the management of the house, if Miss Rawcliffe desired it; but she declared she would not give him the trouble.

"I should not deem it a trouble," he said. "Is Markland to have all the keys?"

"Yes, your reverence," interposed the butler. "Since I am made responsible for everything, it is necessary that I should have the keys. Miss Rawcliffe can depend on me."

"That I can, Markland," she rejoined. "I have had abundant proofs of your trustiness. My return is uncertain. I may be away for two or three months—perhaps for a longer period. During my absence you have full power to act for me; but in any emergency you will of course consult Father Jerome."

"I shall always be ready to advise him, and I trust he will be guided by my counsel," said the priest.

"I will act for the best," observed Markland. "Nothing shall go wrong if I can help it. But you must please excuse me, miss. I have much to do, and not too much time to do it in. I must get the old coach put in order for the journey. As you know, it has not been out for this many a day."

"Daughter," said the priest, as soon as Markland was gone, "you place too much confidence in that man. I hope you may not be deceived in him. He ought not to have access to the strong room. Better leave the key of that room with me."

"I would not hurt his feelings by withholding that key from him," replied Constance. "But I have no fear of Markland. He is honesty itself."

Later on in the day, Constance had some further conversation in private with the old butler, and, notwithstanding Father Jerome's disparaging observations, she showed no diminution in her confidence in him; but gave him particular instructions as to how he was to act under certain circumstances, and concluded by desiring him on no account to allow the priest to enter the strong room.

"He has no business there, Markland," she observed, significantly.

"And I will take good care he doesn't get in," rejoined the old butler. "I think I shall prove a match for Father Jerome with all his cunning. But oh! my dear young lady," he added, "how it would gladden my heart if you should be able to bring back Sir Conway with you. Oh! if I should see him restored to his own, and made happy with her he loves best, I shall die content!"

"Well, Markland, Dr. Byrom holds out a hope of pardon. Should I have any good news to communicate, you shall be among the first to hear it."

"Thank you! thank you, miss!" he cried, hastening out of the room to hide his emotion.

The parting between Monica and her mother

took place in the invalid lady's room. No one was present at the time, for Constance had just bade adieu to her aunt. As Monica knelt on a footstool beside her mother, the latter gazed long and earnestly into her face, as if regarding her for the last time.

"We shall never meet again in this world, my dear child," she said. "I shall be gone before you return. But do not heed me. You cannot disobey the summons you have received. Go!—attend your affianced husband in his prison. Lighten his captivity. Solace him—pray with him—and should his judges condemn him, prepare him to meet his fate!"

"I will—I will," cried Monica. "But do not utterly dishearten me."

"I would not pain you, my dear child," said her mother, in accents of deepest sympathy. "But the words rise unbidden to my lips, and I must give utterance to them. Your case has been my case. Agony, such as I once endured, you will have to endure. But your trial will not be prolonged like mine. I had a terrible dream last night. I cannot recount it to you, but it has left a profound impression on my mind. I fear what I beheld may come to pass."

"What was it?" exclaimed Monica, shuddering. "Let me know the worst. I can bear it."

"No—I have said too much already. And now embrace me, dearest child. We shall not be long separated."

Monica flung her arms round her mother's neck, and kissed her again and again—sobbing a tender farewell.

She then moved slowly towards the door, but on reaching it, she rushed back, and once more embraced her.

Thus they parted. Mrs. Butler's presentiments were justified. They never met again.

XVI.

The Journey.

THE old family coach, with four horses attached to it, was drawn up in the court-yard. The luggage was packed. The servants were assembled in the hall to bid their young mistress good-bye, when Constance and Monica came down-stairs fully attired for the journey.

They were followed by Miss Rawcliffe's pretty maid, Lettice, who, with the man-servant, Gregory, had been chosen to accompany them to London. Lettice carried a great bundle of cloaks, and looked full of delight, forming a strong contrast to the two young ladies. Monica, indeed, was dissolved in tears, and hurried on to bury herself in the furthest corner of the carriage.

Constance, though wearing a sad expression, was far more composed, and replied kindly to the valedictions of the household. She also bade adieu to Father Jerome, who attended her to the door, and gave her his benediction. To Markland she had a few words to say, and she then stepped into the carriage followed by Lettice. After putting up

the steps and fastening the door, Gregory mounted to the box.

All being now ready, Markland bowed respectfully and ordered the postillions to drive on. Next moment the large coach rolled over the drawbridge, and the old butler and the gate-keeper watched it as it took its way through the park. The drive was not very cheerful, but before they reached Macclesfield, Constance had recovered her spirits.

At the Old Angel they found Dr. Byrom and his daughter, who had posted from Manchester, waiting for them. The doctor's trunks were quickly transferred to the carriage, while he and Beppy took their seats inside. No inconvenience whatever was caused by this addition to the party, for the coach was capacious enough to hold half a dozen persons comfortably. That night they stopped at Ashbourne, and next day proceeded to Leicester.

It is not our intention to describe the journey to London, unmarked as it was by any incident worthy of note, but we must mention that owing to the unfailing good-humour of Dr. Byrom and his daughter, the three days spent on the road passed away very pleasantly.

No more agreeable companion could be found than the doctor, and if Beppy did not possess the remarkable conversational powers of her father, she

was extremely lively and entertaining. She made every effort to cheer Monica, and to a certain extent succeeded.

Dr. Byrom had far less difficulty in dissipating Constance's gloom, and leading her to take a brighter view of the future. So confident did he seem that a pardon could be obtained for Atherton, that her uneasiness on that score, if not removed, was materially lightened.

With the exception of Dr. Byrom, not one of the travellers had previously visited London, and when they first caught sight of the vast city from Highgate Hill, and noted its numerous towers and spires, with the dome of St. Paul's rising in the midst of them, they were struck with admiration.

They were still gazing at the prospect, and Dr. Byrom was pointing out the Tower and other celebrated structures, when the clatter of hoofs reached their ears, and in another minute a well-mounted horseman presented himself at the carriage window. At first the young ladies thought it was a highwayman, and even Dr. Byrom shared the opinion, but a second glance showed them that the formidable equestrian was no other than Atherton Legh.

"My sudden appearance seems to alarm you," he cried, smiling, as he bowed to the party. "I have been nearer to you than you imagined, and could

at any time have overtaken you had I thought proper. But before you enter yonder mighty city I should like to know where I shall find you."

"We shall put up at the St. James's Hotel in Jermyn-street," replied Dr. Byrom, "but you had better not come there at first. I will give you a place of rendezvous. Be in the Mall in St. James's Park to-morrow afternoon, about four o'clock, and look out for me."

"I will not fail," replied Atherton. Again bowing round and glancing tenderly at Constance, he galloped off.

Gregory, the man-servant on the box, and the postillions, had seen his approach with dismay, being under the same impression as the gentlefolks inside, and fully expected the carriage would be stopped. Gregory, however, speedily recognised the young gentleman, and called to the postillions that it was all right.

Brief as it was, the unexpected rencounter was highly satisfactory to Constance, as it relieved her mind of any anxiety she had felt as to Atherton's safety.

Within half an hour after this little incident, which furnished them with abundant materials for conversation, they reached the outskirts of London,

and were soon making their way through a variety of streets towards the west end of the town.

Prepared as they were for something extraordinary, our young country ladies were fairly bewildered by all they beheld. Oxford-street they thought wonderful, but it was quite eclipsed by Hanover-square, Bond-street, and Piccadilly.

At length they reached Jermyn-street, where they found very charming apartments at the St. James's Hotel.

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

BOOK VI.

KENNINGTON COMMON.

BOOK VI.

I.

Monica visits Jemmy in Newgate.

On the morning after the arrival of the party in town, Monica being all anxiety to see her lover, Dr. Byrom accompanied her in a hackney-coach to the prison in which poor Jemmy was confined. During the drive, she supported herself tolerably well, but on reaching Newgate she well-nigh fainted.

The necessary arrangements for her admittance to the prisoner having been made by the doctor, he assisted her out of the coach.

On entering the lodge, she was obliged to remove her hood. A gaoler then conducted them along a passage that skirted the refection hall, after which they ascended a short stone staircase which brought them to a gallery containing several chambers.

Unlocking the door of one of these cells the gaoler disclosed Jemmy. He was seated at a small table reading, and on raising his head, and beholding Monica, he sprang to his feet, and with a cry of delight clasped her to his breast.

So tender was their meeting that even the hardened gaoler was touched by it.

For a minute or two Jemmy did not notice Dr. Byrom, but on becoming sensible of his presence he wrung his hand, and thanked him in heartfelt tones for bringing his mistress to him. The doctor then told Monica that he would wait for her in the hall below, and quitted the cell.

"And so this is your prison-chamber, dearest Jemmy!" said Monica, glancing round it. "'Tis just the room I pictured from your description."

"I thought it dismal at first," he rejoined; "but I have become quite content with it. I shall feel no longer miserable since you are come. You must never leave me more."

"I never will," she replied.

They then lapsed into silence. Words seemed unnecessary to express their thoughts, and it was quite happiness enough to them to be together.

Leaving them we shall follow Dr. Byrom to the hall ward, where he found several prisoners assembled. Amongst them were Theodore Deacon and Tom Syddall. Taking the former aside he acquainted him with the death of his brother Robert, of which the young man had not heard. Though deeply affected by the intelligence, Captain Deacon bore it firmly.

Shortly afterwards Colonel Townley entered the hall, and on seeing Dr. Byrom immediately came up to him, and shook hands with him very cordially.

"We meet again under rather melancholy circumstances, my dear doctor," he said. "But I am extremely glad to see you. Fortune has played me false, but I hope she has nothing worse in store for me. The Government must deliver me up. They cannot deny that I hold a commission from the King of France, and that I have been fifteen years in the French service. Still I know the hazard I run," he added, shrugging his shoulders. "But come with me to my room. I want to say a word to you in private."

With this, he led the doctor to a cell situated near the hall. It was somewhat larger than the chamber allotted to Captain Dawson, and better furnished.

"Pray take a seat," said the colonel, doing the honours of his room. "I want to learn something about Atherton Legh."

"He is safe and in London," replied Dr. Byrom. "I expect to see him to-day. I hope to procure him a pardon, and I will tell you how. You are aware that his mother was Miss Conway. She was sister to Colonel Conway, who is now aide-de-camp

to the Duke of Cumberland, and a great favourite of his royal highness. If Colonel Conway will intercede for his nephew with the duke, no doubt he will be successful."

"I should think so," replied Townley. "But is Colonel Conway aware of his nephew's existence?"

"No," replied Dr. Byrom. "If he has heard of him at all, it must be as Captain Legh. He may have seen him at Carlisle."

"Yes, when the young man was captured during a sally," said Townley; "but he knew nothing of the relationship. However, unless the colonel should be deeply offended with his nephew for joining the prince, he can obtain his pardon, that is certain. Was there any intercourse between Sir Richard Rawcliffe and the Conway family?"

"Not since the death of Sir Oswald's widow. They did not like him—and no wonder. But all this is favourable to our young friend. They will be glad to recognise him as Sir Conway."

"I don't doubt it," replied Townley. "I hope he may regain Rawcliffe Hall, and marry his fair cousin."

They then began to discuss political matters, and were talking together in a low tone when the goaler entered the cell and informed Dr. Byrom that the young lady he had brought to the prison was

waiting for him. The doctor then took leave of his friend, promising to visit him again very shortly, and accompanied the goaler to the lodge, where he found Monica. A coach was then called and took them to Jermyn-street.

II.

Colonel Conway.

They found Constance and Beppy prepared for a walk. Beppy had taken particular pains with her toilette, and being rather gaily attired, formed a contrast to Constance, who was still in deep mourning. They tried to persuade Monica to accompany them, but she declined, so they went out with Dr. Byrom, and walked down St. James's-street to the Park. The day was fine, and they were quite enchanted with the novelty and brilliancy of the scene. Both young ladies looked so well that they attracted considerable attention among the gaily-attired company. After walking about for some time they perceived Atherton, who immediately joined them. He was plainly but handsomely dressed, and looked exceedingly well.

"I have arranged matters for you," said Dr. Byrom. "A room is secured for you at the St. James's Hotel. You must pass as my son Edward. That will remove all suspicion."

"I shall be quite content to do so," replied the young man.

They then continued their walk, and had quitted the crowded part of the Mall, when an officer in full uniform, and followed by an orderly, was seen riding slowly down the avenue in the direction of the Horse Guards. He was a fine handsome man in the prime of life, and of very distinguished appearance. Atherton immediately recognised him as Colonel Conway, and, acting upon a sudden impulse, stepped forward to address him.

Colonel Conway reined in his steed, and returned the young man's salute.

"I forget your name," said the colonel. "But unless my eyes deceive me, I have seen you before."

"You saw me at Carlisle, colonel."

"Why, then, you were in Colonel Townley's Manchester Regiment—you are the rebel officer whom I myself captured. How is it that you act in this foolhardy manner? I shall be compelled to order your immediate arrest!"

"Not so, colonel. I am perfectly safe with you."

"How, sir!" cried Colonel Conway, sharply. "Dare you presume?"

"You will not arrest your sister's son," replied Atherton.

"Did I hear aright?" exclaimed the colonel, scanning him narrowly.

"Yes, I am your nephew, the son of Sir Oswald Rawcliffe," replied the young man.

Colonel Conway uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"I don't doubt what you say," he cried. "You certainly bear a remarkable resemblance to your father. Am I to conclude you are the missing heir?"

"Even so," replied Atherton. "I have sufficient proofs to support my claim whenever I choose to make it. But it is a long story, and cannot be told now. Dr. Byrom of Manchester will vouch for the truth of the statement."

And at a sign from the young man the doctor stepped forward.

"I did not expect to be called up at this moment, colonel," said the doctor. "But you may rest satisfied that this young gentleman is your nephew. He is the lost Sir Conway Rawcliffe."

"But you did not serve under that name at Carlisle?" cried the colonel, eagerly. "If I remember right, you were known as Atherton Legh?"

"Exactly," replied the young man. "I have not yet assumed my rightful name and title."

"I am glad of it," cried the colonel. "By Heaven! I am fairly perplexed how to act."

"You will not act precipitately, colonel," said Dr.

Byrom. "It was my intention to communicate with you on your nephew's behalf this very day."

"I wish I had not seen him," cried the colonel. "Why did he put himself in my way?"

"I had no such design, sir, I assure you," said Atherton.

"Will you allow us to wait on you, colonel?" asked Dr. Byrom.

"Wait on me! No! unless you want the young man to be arrested. Where are you staying?" he added to Atherton.

"You will find me at the St. James's Hotel at any hour you may please to appoint, colonel."

"I am staying there, colonel," said Dr. Byrom; and so is Miss Rawcliffe—the late Sir Richard Rawcliffe's daughter."

Colonel Conway reflected for a moment. Then addressing Atherton, he said:

"On consideration, I will see you. Be with me at Cumberland House to-morrow morning at ten o'clock."

"I will be there," was the reply.

"Mind, I make no promises, but I will see what can be done. I should wish you to accompany the young man, Dr. Byrom."

The doctor bowed.

"You say Miss Rawcliffe is staying at the St. James's Hotel?"

"She is staying there with my daughter and myself, colonel. They are both yonder. May I present you to them?"

"Not now," replied the colonel. "Bring them with you to Cumberland House to-morrow. They may be of use." Then turning to Atherton, he added, "I shall expect you."

With a military salute, he then rode off towards the Horse Guards, followed by his orderly, leaving both his nephew and the doctor full of hope, which was shared by Constance and Beppy when they learnt what had occurred.

III.

Cumberland House.

NEXT morning, at the hour appointed, Constance and Beppy, accompanied by Dr. Byrom and Atherton, repaired to Cumberland House in Arlington-street. Sentinels were stationed at the gates, and in the court half a dozen officers were standing, who glanced at the party as they passed by. In the spacious vestibule stood a stout hall-porter and a couple of tall and consequential-looking footmen in royal liveries. One of the latter seemed to expect them, for, bowing deferentially, he conducted them into a handsome apartment looking towards the Park.

Here they remained for a few minutes, when a side door opened and an usher in plain attire came in, and addressing the two young ladies, begged them to follow him.

After consulting Dr. Byrom by a look they complied, and the usher led them into an adjoining apartment, which appeared to be a cabinet, and where they found a tall, well-proportioned man in

military undress, whom they took to be Colonel Conway, though they thought he looked younger than they expected to find him.

This personage received them rather haughtily and distantly, and in a manner far from calculated to set them at their ease. He did not even beg them to be seated, but addressing Constance said:

"Miss Rawcliffe, I presume?"

Constance answered in the affirmative, and presented Beppy, to whom the supposed colonel bowed.

"I have heard of your father," he said. "A clever man, but a Jacobite." Then turning to Constance, he remarked, "Before you say anything to me understand that every word will reach the ears of the Duke of Cumberland. Now what have you to allege in behalf of your cousin? On what grounds does he merit clemency?

"I am bound to intercede for him, sir," she replied; "since it was by my persuasion that he was induced to join the insurrection."

"You avow yourself a Jacobite then?" said the colonel, gruffly. "But no wonder. Your father, Sir Richard, belonged to the disaffected party, and you naturally share his opinions."

"I have changed my opinions since then," said Constance; "but I was undoubtedly the cause of this

rash young man joining the insurgent army. Pray use the influence you possess over the duke to-obtain him a pardon."

"What am I to say to the duke?"

"Say to his royal highness that my cousin deeply regrets the rash step he has taken, and is sensible of the crime he has committed in rising in rebellion against the king. He is at large, as you know, but is ready to give himself up, and submit to his majesty's mercy."

"If grace be extended to him I am certain he will serve the king faithfully," said Beppy.

"I will tell you one thing, Miss Rawcliffe, and you too, Miss Byrom; the Duke of Cumberland feels that a severe example ought to be made of the officers of the Manchester Regiment. They are double-dyed rebels and traitors."

"But we trust his royal highness will make an exception in this case," said Beppy. "We would plead his youth and inexperience, and the influence brought to bear upon him."

"But all this might be urged in behalf of the other officers—notably in the case of Captain James Dawson."

"True," said Beppy. "But as I understand they are not willing to submit themselves, whereas Sir

Conway Rawcliffe has come to throw himself upon the king's mercy."

"But how can we be certain he will not take up arms again?"

"Such a thing would be impossible," cried Constance, earnestly. "I will answer for him with my life."

"And so will I," cried Beppy, with equal fervour.

"Once more I implore you to intercede for him with the duke," cried Constance. "Do not allow him to be sacrificed."

"Sacrificed! His life is justly forfeited. When he took this step he knew perfectly well what the consequences would be if he failed."

"I cannot deny it," replied Constance. "But he now bitterly repents."

"Surely, sir, you will answer for him?" cried Beppy.

"I answer for him!" exclaimed the supposed colonel.

"Yes, for your nephew," said Beppy. "Had you been with him he would never have taken this false step."

"Well, I will hear what he has to say. But I must first make a memorandum."

He then sat down at a table on which writing materials were placed, and traced a few lines on a

sheet of paper, attaching a seal to what he had written. This done he struck a small silver bell, and in answer to the summons, the usher immediately appeared. Having received his instructions, which were delivered in a low tone, the usher bowed profoundly and quitted the cabinet.

Scarcely was he gone when an officer entered —a fine commanding-looking person, but several years older than the other.

On the entrance of this individual a strange suspicion crossed the minds of both the young ladies. But they were left in no doubt when the newcomer said:

"I trust Miss Rawcliffe has prevailed?"

"I must talk with your nephew, Colonel Conway, before I can say more."

"Colonel Conway!" exclaimed Constance. "Have I been all this time in the presence of——"

"You have been conversing with the Duke of Cumberland," supplied Colonel Conway.

"Oh, I implore your royal highness to forgive me!" exclaimed Constance. "Had I known——"

"I shall die with shame!" cried Beppy.

At this moment Dr. Byrom and Atherton were ushered into the cabinet.

On beholding the Duke of Cumberland, whom

both the new-comers recognised, they knew not what to think, but each made a profound obeisance.

"This is my nephew, Sir Conway Rawcliffe, your royal highness," said the colonel.

"Hitherto, I have only known him as Captain Legh, the rebel," observed the duke, rather sternly.

"Rebel no longer," said Colonel Conway. "He has come to deliver himself up to your royal highness, and to solicit your gracious forgiveness for his misdeeds."

"Does he acknowledge his errors?" demanded the duke.

"He heartily and sincerely abjures them. If a pardon be extended to him, your august sire will ever find him a loyal subject."

"Is this so?" demanded the duke.

"It is," replied the young man, bending lowly before the duke. "I here vow allegiance to the king, your father."

"Well, Sir Conway," replied the duke, "since you are sensible of your errors, I will promise you a pardon from his majesty. But you will understand that a point has been strained in your favour, and that you owe your life partly to the intercession of your uncle, whose great services I desire to reward, and partly to the solicitations of these your friends. It has been said of me, I know, that I am

of a savage, and inflexible disposition; but I should be savage, indeed, if I could resist such prayers as have been addressed to me—especially by your fair cousin," he added, glancing at Constance.

"Those who have termed your royal highness savage have done you a great injustice," she said.

"I must bear the remarks of my enemies," pursued the duke, "satisfied that I act for the best. Here is your protection," he continued, giving Sir Conway the document he had just drawn up and signed. "You will receive your pardon hereafter."

"I thank your royal highness from the bottom of my heart," said Sir Conway. "You will have no reason to regret your clemency."

"Serve the king as well as you have served his enemies, and I shall be content," said the duke. "'Tis lucky for you that your estates will not be forfeited. But I hope your fair cousin may still continue mistress of Rawcliffe."

"I would never deprive her of the property," said Sir Conway.

"Nay, you must share it with her. And take heed, my dear young lady, if you are united to Sir Conway, as I hope you may be, that you do not shake his loyalty. You must forswear all your Jacobite principles."

"They are forsworn already," she said.

"May I venture to put in a word?" observed Dr. Byrom. "Such faith had I in your royal highness's clemency, and in your known friendship for Colonel Conway, that I urged his nephew to take this step which has had so happy a result."

"You then are the author of the plot?" cried the duke.

"Perhaps I was at the bottom of it all," cried Beppy. "I don't like to lose my share of the credit. I had the most perfect confidence in your royal highness's good-nature."

"'Tis the first time I have been complimented on my good-nature," observed the duke, smiling—"especially by a Jacobite, as I believe you are, Miss Byrom."

"After what has just occurred I could not possibly remain a Jacobite," she said. "I shall trumpet forth your royal highness's magnanimity to all."

"And so shall I," said her father.

"When next I see Sir Conway Rawcliffe," said the duke, "I trust it will be at St. James's Palace, and I also hope he will bring Lady Rawcliffe to town with him. Meantime, I advise him to retire to his country seat till this storm has blown over. It may possibly fall on some heads."

"I shall not fail to profit by your royal highness's advice," replied Sir Conway, bowing deeply.

Profound obeisances were then made by all the party, and they were about to depart, when the duke said in a low tone to Constance:

"I depend upon you to maintain your cousin in his present disposition. Go back to Rawcliffe Hall."

" Alas!" she rejoined, "I would obey your royal highness, but I cannot leave just now. My cousin, Miss Butler, is betrothed to Captain Dawson, of the Manchester Regiment. I must remain with her."

"Better not," rejoined the duke, in an altered tone. "But as you will. 'Twill be vain to plead to me again. I can do nothing more."

Colonel Conway here interposed, and taking her hand, led her towards the door.

"Say not a word more," he whispered; "or you will undo all the good that has been done."

The party then quitted Cumberland House, and returned to the St. James's Hotel.

Needless to say, they all felt happy—the happiest of all being Sir Conway.

The Duke of Cumberland's injunctions were strictly obeyed. Next day, the family coach was on its way back, containing the whole party, with the exception of poor Monica, who would not return, but was left behind with Lettice.

Three days afterwards the Duke of Cumberland, attended by Colonel Conway, proceeded to Scotland, where the decisive battle of Culloden was fought.

IV.

The Trial of the Manchester Rebels.

An interval of some months being allowed to elapse, we come to a very melancholy period of our story.

The unfortunate prisoners, who had languished during the whole time in Newgate, were ordered to prepare for their trial, which was intended to take place in the Court House at St. Margaret's Hill, Southwark, before Lord Chief Justice Lee, Lord Chief Justice Willes, Justice Wright, Justice Dennison, Justice Foster, Baron Reynolds, Baron Clive, and other commissioners specially appointed for the purpose.

Previously to the trial the prisoners were ordered to be removed to the new gaol at Southwark.

'Twas a sad blow both to Monica and her unfortunate lover. So much kindness and consideration had been shown to Jemmy during his long confinement in Newgate by all the officials, that he was quite grieved to leave the prison.

Familiar with every little object in his cell, he

was unwilling to exchange it for another prison-chamber. In this narrow room he and Monica had passed several hours of each day. Their converse had been chiefly of another world, for Jemmy had given up all hopes of a pardon, or an exchange, and they had prayed fervently together, or with the ordinary. Monica, as we know, was a Papist, but Jemmy still adhered to the Protestant faith. Before her departure from London, Constance had taken leave of him; but Sir Conway could not consistently visit the prison after the pardon he had received from the Duke of Cumberland. Dr. Byrom and his daughter had likewise visited him before they left town.

About a week after Constance's return to Rawcliffe Hall, Mrs. Butler died, and the sad tidings were communicated with as much care as possible to Monica. Prepared for the event, the poor girl bore it with pious resignation.

"My mother was right," she said. "She foresaw that we should never meet again."

At length the hour for departure came, and Jemmy was forced to quit his cell. As he stepped forth, his heart died within him.

In the lodge he took leave of the gaoler who had attended him, and of the other officials, and they all expressed an earnest hope that he might

be exchanged. All had been interested in the tender attachment between him and Monica, which had formed a little romance in the prison.

The removal took place at night. Jemmy was permitted to take a hackney-coach, and, as a special favour, Monica was allowed to accompany him—a guard being placed on the box.

To prevent any attempt at escape he was fettered, and this grieved him sorely, for he had not been placed in irons during his confinement in Newgate.

On London Bridge, a stoppage occurred, during which the coaches were examined.

On their arrival at the prison at Southwark, the lovers were separated. Immured in a fresh cell, Jemmy felt completely wretched, and Monica, more dead than alive, was driven back to Jermyn-street.

Next day, however, she was allowed to see her lover, but only for a few minutes, and under greater restrictions than had been enforced in Newgate. Jemmy, however, had in some degree recovered his spirits, and strove to reassure her.

Three days afterwards the trials commenced. They took place, as appointed, at the Court House, in St. Margaret's Hill.

Colonel Townley was first arraigned, and maintained an undaunted demeanour. When he ap-

peared in the dock a murmur ran through the crowded court, which was immediately checked. The counsel for the king were the Attorney-General, Sir John Strange, the Solicitor-General, Sir Richard Lloyd, and the Honourable Mr. York—those for the prisoner were Mr. Serjeant Wynne and Mr. Clayton. The prisoner was charged with procuring arms, ammunition, and other instruments, and composing a regiment for the service of the Pretender to wage war against his most sacred majesty; with marching through and invading several parts of the kingdom, and unlawfully seizing his majesty's treasure in many places for the service of his villainous cause, and taking away the horses and other goods of his majesty's peaceful subjects. The prisoner was furthermore charged, in open defiance of his majesty's undoubted right and title to the crown of these realms, with frequently causing the Pretender's son to be proclaimed in a public and solemn manner as regent, and himself marching at the head of a pretended regiment, which he called the Manchester Regiment.

To this indictment the prisoner pleaded not guilty.

The chief witness against the prisoner was Ensign Maddox, an officer of the regiment, who had consented to turn evidence for the Crown. Maddox

declared that he had marched out with the prisoner as an ensign, but never had any commission though he carried the colours; that the prisoner gave command as colonel of the Manchester Regiment; and that he ordered the regiment to be drawn up in the churchyard in Manchester, where the Pretender's son reviewed them, and that he marched at the head of the regiment to Derby. That the prisoner marched as colonel of the Manchester Regiment in their retreat from Derby to Carlisle; that he was made by the Pretender's son commandant of Carlisle, and that he took on him the command of the whole rebel forces left there; that he had heard the prisoner have some words with Colonel Hamilton, who was governor of the citadel, for surrendering the place, and not holding out to the last; and that he had particularly seen the prisoner encourage the rebel officers and soldiers to make sallies out on the king's forces.

After Maddox's cross examination evidence was produced that Colonel Townley was many years in the French service under a commission from the French king; and since he was taken at Carlisle had been constantly supplied with money from France. Other witnesses were called to invalidate the evidence of Maddox by showing that he was unworthy of credit.

But the court ruled that no man who is a liege subject of his majesty can justify taking up arms, and acting in the service of a prince who is actually at war with his majesty.

After the prisoner's evidence had been gone through, the Solicitor-General declared, "That he felt certain the jury would consider that the overt acts of high treason charged against the prisoner in compassing and imagining the death of the king, and in levying war against his majesty's person and government, had been sufficiently proved."

While the jury withdrew to consider their verdict, Colonel Townley looked more indifferent than any other person in court. On their return in about ten minutes, the clerk of arraigns said:

"How say you, gentlemen, are you agreed on your verdict? Do you find Frances Townley guilty of the high treason whereof he stands indicted, or not guilty?"

"Guilty," replied the foreman.

Sentence of death was then pronounced upon him by Lord Chief Justice Lee, and during that awful moment he did not betray the slightest discomposure.

He was then delivered to the care of Mr. Jones, keeper of the county gaol of Surrey.

Captain Dawson's trial next took place. His youth and good looks excited general sympathy.

The indictment was similar to that of Colonel Townley—the treason being alleged to be committed at the same time. The Attorney-General set forth that the prisoner, contrary to his allegiance, accepted a .commission in the Manchester Regiment raised by Colonel Townley for the service of the Pretender, and acted as captain; that he marched to Derby in a hostile manner; that he retreated with the rebel army from Derby to Manchester, and thence to Clifton Moor, where in a skirmish he headed his men against the Duke of Cumberland's troops; and that he had surrendered at the same time as Colonel Townley and the other officers.

Evidence to the above effect was given by Maddox and other witnesses.

No defence was made by the prisoner, and the jury, without going out of court, brought him in guilty.

As their verdict was delivered, a convulsive sob was heard, and attention being directed to the spot whence the sound proceeded, it was found that a young lady had fainted. As she was carried out the prisoner's eyes anxiously followed her, and it was soon known that she was his betrothed.

The rest of the rebel officers were subsequently

tried and found guilty, and sentence of death was passed upon them all.

The order for the execution was couched in the following terms:

"Let the several prisoners herein named return to the gaol of the county of Surrey whence they came. Thence they must be drawn to the place of execution, on Kennington Common, and when brought there must be hanged by the neck—but not till they are dead, for they must be cut down alive. Then their hearts must be taken out, and burnt before their faces. Their heads must be severed from their bodies, and their bodies divided into quarters, and these must be at the king's disposal."

V.

The Night before the Executions.

On the night preceding the day appointed for carrying out the terrible sentence, poor Jemmy and his betrothed were allowed by Mr. Jones, the keeper of the prison, to pass an hour together.

While clasping her lover's fettered hands, Monica looked tenderly into his face, and said:

"I shall not long survive you, Jemmy."

"Banish these thoughts," he rejoined. "You are young, and I hope may have many years of happiness. Be constant to my memory, that is all I ask. If disembodied spirits can watch over the living I will watch over you."

With a sad smile he then added: "For a few minutes let us live in the past. Let me look back to the time when I first beheld you, and when your beauty made an impression on me that has never been effaced. Let me recal those happy hours when smiles only lighted up that lovely countenance, and no tear was ever shed. Oh! those were blissful days!"

"Let me also recal the past, dearest Jemmy,"

she cried. "How well do I recollect our first meeting! I thought I had seen no one like you, and I think so still. I could not be insensible to the devotion of a youth so gallant, and my heart was quickly yours. Alas! alas! I took advantage of your love to induce you to join this fatal expedition."

"Do not reproach yourself, dearest Monica. 'Twas my destiny. I am a true adherent of the Stuarts. Had I ten thousand lives I would give them all to King James and my country! I shall die with those sentiments on my lips."

As he spoke his pale cheek flushed, and his eye kindled with its former fire. She gazed at him with admiration.

But after a few moments a change came over his countenance, and with a look of ill-concealed anguish, he said:

"We must part to-night, dearest Monica. 'Tis better you should not come to me to-morrow."

"Nay, dearest Jemmy, I will attend you to the last."

"Impossible! it cannot be. My execution will be accompanied by barbarities worthy of savages, and not of civilised beings. You must not—shall not witness such a frightful spectacle."

"If the sight kills me I will be present."

"Since you are resolved, I will say no more. At least, you will see how firmly I can die."

Just then Mr. Jones came in to remind them that it was time to part, and with a tender embrace, Jemmy consigned her to his care.

On learning that she meant to attend the execution, Mr. Jones endeavoured to dissuade her, but she continued unshaken in her purpose.

VI.

The Fatal Day.

NEXT morning all those condemned to die breakfasted together in a large room on the ground floor of the prison. Their fetters had been previously removed.

There was no bravado, no undue levity in their manner or discourse, but they looked surprisingly cheerful in spite of the near approach of death under the most dreadful form.

All had passed the greater part of the night in prayer. And as they hoped they had settled their account on high, there was nothing to disturb their serenity.

"Our time draws very near," observed Syddall to Captain Dawson, who sat next him. "But for my part I feel as hearty as ever I did in my life. Indeed, I think we all look remarkably well considering our position."

"Death does not terrify me in the least," said Jemmy. "Its bitterness is past with me. May Heaven have mercy on us all!"

"We die in a good cause," observed Captain Deacon. "I heartily forgive all my enemies—even the chief of them, the Elector of Hanover and the Duke of Cumberland. It has been falsely said that I was induced by my revered father to take up arms for the prince. The assertion I shall contradict in the manifesto I have prepared. For the rest I care not what my enemies say of me."

"The Duke of Cumberland has not kept faith with us," exclaimed Captain Fletcher. "When we surrendered at Carlisle, he declared that the garrison should not be put to the sword, but reserved for his father's pleasure—the Elector's pleasure being that we should be hanged, drawn, and quartered. Gracious Heaven! deliver all Englishmen from this Hanoverian clemency!"

"My sole regret is that we ever surrendered," cried Colonel Townley. "Would we all had died sword in hand! However, since we are brought to this pass, we must meet our fate like brave men. As we have been allowed wine with our last repast, let us drink to King James the Third!"

Every glass was raised in response, after which they all rose from the table.

Several friends of the prisoners were now per-

mitted to enter the room. Among them were Mr. Saunderson, Colonel Townley's confessor, and Captain Deacon's youngest brother, Charles.

Charles Deacon had been reprieved; but, while embracing his brother for the last time, he expressed deep regret that he could not share his fate.

Poor Monica was there—dressed in deep mourning. She and her lover were somewhat removed from the rest; but they were so engrossed by each other, that they seemed to be quite alone.

Their parting attracted the attention of Tom Syddall, and moved him to tears—though he had shed none for his own misfortunes.

"How did you pass the night, dearest Jemmy?" inquired Monica.

"Chiefly in prayer," he replied. "But towards morn I fell asleep, and dreamed that you and I were children, and playing together in the fields. It was a pleasant dream, and I was sorry when I awoke."

"I, too, had a pleasant dream, dearest Jemmy," she rejoined. "I thought I saw my mother. She had a seraphic aspect, and seemed to smile upon

me. That smile has comforted me greatly. Ha! what sound is that?"

"'Tis the guard assembling in the court-yard," he replied. "We must part. Do not give way."

"Fear me not," she cried, throwing her arms around his neck.

At this juncture, the sheriffs entered the room, attended by the keeper of the prison. The sheriffs wore black gowns, and were without their chains.

While the sheriffs were exchanging a few words with Colonel Townley and the other prisoners, Mr. Jones conducted Monica to the mourning-coach which was waiting for her at the gates of the prison.

Meanwhile, a guard of grenadiers had been drawn up in the court-yard, and the ignominious conveyances, destined to take the prisoners to the place of execution, had been got ready.

By-and-by, the unfortunate men were brought down, and in the presence of the sheriffs and the keeper of the prison were bound to the hurdles with cords.

This done, the dismal procession set forth.

At the head of the train marched a party of

grenadiers. Then followed the sheriffs in their carriages, with their tipstaves walking beside them.

Those about to suffer came next. On the foremost hurdle were stretched Colonel Townley, Captain Deacon, and Jemmy Dawson. The remaining prisoners were bound in like manner. Another party of grenadiers followed.

Next came several hearses, containing coffins, destined for the mangled bodies of the victims.

After the hearses followed a number of mourning-coaches, drawn by horses decked with trappings of woe. In the foremost of these coaches sat Monica, with her attendant, Lettice.

In this order the gloomy procession shaped its course slowly towards the place of execution. The streets were crowded with spectators anxious to obtain a sight of the unfortunate men who were dragged in this ignominious manner along the rough pavement. But no groans were uttered—no missiles thrown. On the contrary, much commiseration was manifested by the crowd, especially when the mourning-coaches were seen, and great curiosity was exhibited to obtain a sight of their occupants. For Monica, whose story had become known, unwonted sympathy was displayed.

At length, the train drew near Kennington Common, where a large assemblage was collected to witness the dreadful scene. Hitherto, the crowd had been noisy, but it now became suddenly quiet. In the centre of the common, which of late years has been enclosed, and laid out as a park, a lofty gibbet was reared. Near it was placed a huge block, and close to the latter was a great pile of fagots. On the block were laid an executioner's knife, and one or two other butcherly instruments.

At the foot of the fatal tree stood the executioner—a villainous-looking caitiff—with two assistants quite as repulsive in appearance as himself. The two latter wore leather vests, and their arms were bared to the shoulder.

On the arrival of the train at the place of execution, the sheriffs alighted, and the grenadiers formed a large circle round the gibbet. The prisoners were then released from the hurdles, but their limbs were so stiffened by the bonds that they could scarcely move.

At the same time the fagots were lighted, and a flame quickly arose, giving a yet more terrible character to the scene.

Some little time was allowed the prisoners for preparation, and such of them as had papers and manifestoes delivered them to the sheriffs, by whom they were handed to the tipstaves to be distributed among the crowd.

At this juncture a fair pale face was seen at the window of the foremost mourning-coach, and a hand was waved to one of the prisoners, who returned the farewell salute. This was the lovers' last adieu.

The dreadful business then began.

Colonel Townley was first called upon to mount the ladder. His arms were bound by the executioner, but he was not blindfolded. His deportment was firm—his countenance being lighted up by a scornful smile. After being suspended for a couple of minutes, he was cut down, and laid, still breathing, upon the block, when the terrible sentence was carried out—his heart being flung into the flames and consumed, and his head severed from the body and placed with the quarters in the coffin, which had been brought round to receive the mangled remains.

Colonel Townley's head, we may mention, with

that of poor Jemmy Dawson, was afterwards set on Temple Bar.

Many of the spectators of this tragic scene were greatly affected—but those about to suffer a like fate witnessed it with stern and stoical indifference.

Amid a deep and awful hush, broken by an occasional sob, Jemmy Dawson stepped quickly up the ladder as if anxious to meet his doom; and when his light graceful figure and handsome countenance could be distinguished by the crowd, a murmur of compassion arose.

Again the fair face—now death-like in hue—was seen at the window of the mourning-coach, and Jemmy's dying gaze was fixed upon it.

As his lifeless body was cut down and placed upon the block to be mutilated, and the executioner flung his faithful heart, which happily had ceased beating, into the flames, a cry was heard, and those nearest the mourning-coach we have alluded to, pressed towards it, and beheld the inanimate form of a beautiful girl lying in the arms of an attendant.

All was over.

The story spread from lip to lip among the deeply-sympathising crowd, and many a tear was

shed, and many a prayer breathed that lovers so fond and true might be united above.

Before allowing the curtain to drop on this ghastly spectacle, which lasted upwards of an hour, we feel bound to state that all the sufferers died bravely. Not one quailed. With his last breath, and in a loud voice, Captain Deacon called out "God save King James the Third!"

When the halter was placed round poor Tom Syddall's neck, the executioner remarked that he trembled.

"Tremble!" exclaimed Tom indignantly. "I recoil from thy hateful touch—that is all."

And to prove that his courage was unshaken, he took a pinch of snuff.

The heads of these two brave men were sent to Manchester, and fixed upon spikes on the top of the Exchange.

When he heard that this had been done, Dr. Deacon came forth, and gazed steadfastly at the relics, but without manifesting any sign of grief.

To the bystanders, who were astounded at his seeming unconcern, he said:

"Why should I mourn for my son? He has died the death of a martyr."

He then took off his hat, and bowing reverently to the two heads, departed.

But he never came near the Exchange without repeating the ceremony, and many other inhabitants of the town followed his example.

VII.

Five Years later.

ONCE more, and at a somewhat later date, we shall revisit Rawcliffe Hall.

It still wears an antique aspect, but has a far more cheerful look than of yore. Internally many alterations have been made, which may be safely described as improvements. All the disused apartments have been thrown open, and re-furnished. That part of the mansion in which the tragic event we have recounted took place has been pulled down and rebuilt, and the secret entrance to the library no longer exists. Everything gloomy and ghostly has disappeared.

Father Jerome no longer darkens the place with his presence, but before his departure he was compelled to give up all the documents he had abstracted. A large establishment is kept up, at the head of which is worthy old Markland.

Sir Conway Rawcliffe has long been in possession of the estates and title. Moreover, he is wedded

to the loveliest woman in Cheshire, and their union has been blessed by a son. It is pleasant to see the young baronet in his own house. He has become quite a country gentleman—is fond of all country sports, hunts, shoots, and occupies himself with planting trees in his park, and generally improving his property. So enamoured is he of a country life, so happy at Rawcliffe, that his wife cannot induce him to take a house in town for the spring. His uncle, Colonel Conway, wished him to join the army, but he declined. He avoids all dangerous politics, and is well affected towards the Government.

Lady Rawcliffe is likewise fond of the country, though she would willingly spend a few months in town, now and then, as we have intimated. She looks lovelier than ever. Five years have improved her. Her figure is fuller, bloom has returned to her cheeks, and the melancholy that hung upon her brow has wholly disappeared. Need we say that her husband adores her, and deems himself—and with good reason—the happiest and luckiest of men?

They often talk of Monica and Jemmy Dawson. Time has assuaged their grief, but Constance never

thinks of the ill-fated lovers without a sigh. Poor Monica sleeps peacefully beside her mother in the family vault.

Sir Conway and Lady Rawcliffe frequently pass a day at Manchester with the Byroms. The closest friendship subsists between them and that amiable family. Wonderful to relate, Beppy is still unmarried. That she continues single is clearly her own fault, for she has had plenty of offers, not merely from young churchmen, but from persons of wealth and good position. But she would have none of them. Possibly, she may have had some disappointment, but if so it has not soured her singularly sweet temper, or affected her spirits, for she is just as lively and bewitching as ever. She is a frequent visitor at Rawcliffe Hall.

Dr. Deacon is much changed, but if he mourns for his sons it is in private. After a long imprisonment, his youngest son Charles has been sent into exile.

A word in reference to the unfortunate Parson Coppock. He was imprisoned in Carlisle Castle with the other non-commissioned officers of the Manchester Regiment, and brought to the scaffold.

For many months after the suppression of the

rebellion the magistrates of Manchester held constant meetings at a room in the little street, most appropriately called Dangerous Corner, to compel all suspected persons to take oaths to the Government, and abjure Popery and the Pretender.

Denounced by some of his brother magistrates, and charged by them with aiding and abetting the cause of the rebels, Mr. Fowden, the constable, was tried for high treason at Lancaster, but honourably acquitted.

On his return the worthy gentleman was met by a large party of friends on horseback and triumphantly escorted to his own house.

After being exposed for some time on the Exchange, the heads of poor Theodore Deacon and Tom Syddall were carried away one night—perhaps by the contrivance of the doctor—and secretly buried.

Though disheartened by recent events, the Jacobites still continued in force in Manchester. They greatly rejoiced at the escape of the young Chevalier to France, after his wanderings in the Highlands, and the more hopeful of the party predicted that another invasion would soon be made, and fre-

quently discussed it at the meetings of their club at the Bull's Head.

At length, a general amnesty was proclaimed, and several noted Jacobites, compromised by the part they had taken in the rebellion, reappeared in the town.

Amongst them was the Rev. Mr. Clayton, who was reinstated as chaplain of the collegiate church.

Long afterwards, whenever allusion was made at a Jacobite meeting to the eventful year of our story, it was designated the "fatal 'Forty-Five."

A sad period no doubt. Yet some ancient chroniclers of the town, who have long disappeared from the scene, but to whom we listened delightedly in boyhood, were wont to speak of the prince's visit to Manchester as occurring in the Good Old Times.

The Good Old Times!—all times are good when old!

THE END.

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